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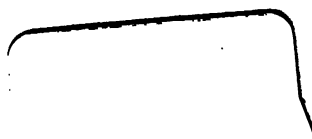


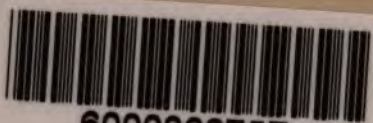


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Cambridge :
Printed at the University Press.

THE INFLUENCE
OF THE
HEBREW AND CHRISTIAN REVELATIONS
ON
ANCIENT HEATHEN WRITERS.

AN ESSAY
WHICH OBTAINED
THE HULSEAN PRIZE FOR THE YEAR 1849.

BY
SAMUEL TOMKINS,
OF ST. CATHARINE'S HALL.



CAMBRIDGE: J. DEIGHTON; AND E. JOHNSON.
LONDON: F. & J. RIVINGTON.
M.DCCC.L.

TO THE
RIGHT WORSHIPFUL THE VICE-CHANCELLOR;
THE
REVEREND THE MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE;
AND THE
REVEREND THE MASTER OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE,
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

THIS ESSAY
IS BY PERMISSION MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

TO THE
REV. GEORGE ELWES CORRIE, B.D.,
MASTER OF JESUS COLLEGE,
NORRISIAN PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY, AND FORMERLY FELLOW AND
TUTOR OF St. CATHARINE'S HALL, CAMBRIDGE,

THIS ESSAY
IS DEDICATED
WITH SENTIMENTS OF GRATITUDE
AND RESPECTFUL ESTEEM
BY
THE AUTHOR.

CLAUSES *directed by the FOUNDER to be always prefixed
to the HULSEAN DISSERTATION.*

CLAUSES from the WILL of the Rev. JOHN HULSE, late of Elworth, in the County of Chester, clerk, deceased : dated the twenty-first day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven ; expressed in the words of the Testator, as he, in order to prevent mistakes, thought proper to draw and write the same himself, and directed that such clauses should every year be printed, to the intent that the several persons, whom it might concern and be of service to, might know that there were such special donations or endowments left for the encouragement of Piety and Learning, in an age so unfortunately addicted to Infidelity and Luxury, and that others might be invited to the like charitable, and, as he humbly hoped, seasonable and useful Benefactions.

He directs that certain rents and profits (now amounting to about a hundred pounds yearly) be paid to such learned and ingenious person, in the University of Cambridge, under the degree of Master of Arts, as shall compose, for that year, the best Dissertation, in the English language, on the Evidences in general, or on the Prophecies or Miracles in particular, or any other particular Argument, whether the same be direct or collateral proofs of the

Christian Religion, in order to evince its truth and excellence; the subject of which Dissertation shall be given out by the Vice-Chancellor, and the Masters of Trinity and Saint John's, his Trustees, or by some of them, on New Year's Day annually; and that such Dissertation as shall be by them, or any two of them, on Christmas Day annually, the best approved, be also printed, and the expense defrayed out of the Author's income under his Will, and the remainder given to him on Saint John the Evangelist's Day following; and he who shall be so rewarded, shall not be admitted at any future time as a Candidate again in the same way, to the intent that others may be invited and encouraged to write on so sacred and sublime a subject.

He also desires, that immediately following the last of the clauses relating to the prize Dissertation, this invocation may be added: "May the Divine Blessing for ever go along with all my benefactions; and may the Greatest and the Best of Beings, by his all-wise Providence and gracious influence, make the same effectual to His own glory, and the good of my fellow-creatures!"

Subject proposed by the TRUSTEES for the Year 1849.

*"The Influence of the Hebrew and Christian Revelations
on Ancient Heathen Writers."*

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THE
INFLUENCE OF THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN
REVELATIONS ON PAGAN WRITERS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE sacred Scriptures claim to be the authoritative instructors of mankind on a class of subjects not within the reach of unaided human reason. And it is a question of importance and deep interest, in what degree it can be shewn, that they *have* imparted the light of religious truth to those nations of mankind who have been in possession of it.

Although the proof of the divine authority of the Sacred Writings rests mainly on that of their historic truth, apologists have always felt the importance to this argument of being able to shew, that they had actually been to mankind the instructors which they claim to be; and from the time of Josephus till the eighteenth century of the Christian era it had been confidently asserted, and maintained, by what were regarded as the clearest proofs, that heathen philosophy derived all its religious light from the Holy Scriptures.

The Reformation in Germany, though doubtless attended with many inestimable blessings, contained some elements of serious evil. It was too much regarded as the achievement of the human intellect; and from its commencement till now an increasing disposition has been manifested to arrogate everything to the powers of the human mind. By what was reckoned the triumphant overthrow of ancient errors which had become connected with sacred historic traditions, a want of reverence for those traditions themselves was fostered, and men began to lose the *obedience* of faith. This spirit, connected as it was with the daring abuses of revived learning, began to throw doubts upon everything whether in literature or religion which had for ages been relied upon as settled and secure.

In profane literature not only were ancient impostures detected and blunders rectified, but, as though it were necessarily a great achievement and an advance of truth to root up what was ancient, scholars began to derive their fame from erasing events and names from history and from the catalogue of ancient writers.

It is also manifest that the followers both of Luther and of Calvin have increasingly shewn a disposition to degrade the character of the Hebrew Revelation. Even those who

would not be classed among the enemies of Christianity, have often confounded the Old Testament revelation with *Judaism*, have spoken of it in degrading terms, or ignored it as a source of genuine religious truth. The circumstance that the Old Testament makes a hierarchy a divine institution, could not be forgiven.

This is one reason why in later times the belief that the Hebrew Scriptures had contributed to the instruction of the ancient heathen, has been treated rather as a superstition of the Christian Fathers than as a well attested truth.

If these opinions, and the philosophy out of which they spring, had been those only of a few individuals whose influence over the literature and religious sentiments of the age had been inconsiderable, they might have been passed by without much notice in the enquiry now before us. But they may be said to have obtained almost absolute dominion in that country into whose hands our ancient literature has for many years almost exclusively fallen; and some of our own most distinguished writers, instead of examining the pretensions, or bearing up against the destructive tendencies of this philosophy, seem more inclined to bow to its decisions and adopt its courses.

Moreover, it is exactly on the subject of our present enquiry that the modern philosophy most strongly dogmatizes. Human reason, according to it, is all-sufficient to develope from its own resources every form and kind of truth ; and there is nothing about which the philosophers of the day have shewn themselves so jealous, as about the undivided credit which is to be given to the ancient heathen for their attainments in the highest of all knowledge.

On every account, therefore, it concerns this philosophy to repudiate the idea that Greece had been in any way indebted to Palestine for its wisdom. To admit this would be to rob philosophy of its proudest trophies. It would be to allow that a people, declared to be destitute of all speculative genius, had forestalled its discoveries, and lifted it above the power of its own flight. And this would be to admit that some other principle than human speculation is the parent of all that is most valuable in human wisdom.

In order to set aside this difficulty, all sorts of violence have been necessary.

The remains of Greek writers have been subjected to a criticism which has marked as spurious all those pieces which savour most of the Hebrew theology.

¹ 'Mosais-
chen Cul-
tus.'

"History"—to use the words of Karl Baehr

—“has been dictated to from the throne of hypothesis.” Fact has been turned into fiction, and fiction into fact, to accommodate this theory. The character of the Hebrew theology has been constantly degraded, or contemptuously ignored.

Or if it could not be denied that the Hebrews were in possession of some better light, the credit of this has been given to their Captivity. Egypt and Babylon have been confidently referred to as the sources of their most sacred observances and their sublimest doctrines. And Christianity itself, because it is closely related to the Hebrew theology, and detracts still more from the credit of human wisdom, has been subjected to a series of attacks, increasing in temerity, till at length in Protestant Germany the faith of the Gospel is maintaining a doubtful struggle for existence¹.

Happily, the evidence on which our religion rests, and our faith in historic tradition, are so well established in this country, that the entire task of early Christian writers in this department may be spared us ; but that

¹ The serious extent to which this is true, and the anxiety which is felt in consequence by those who still adhere to the Christian faith, is perhaps not sufficiently known in this country. Extracts from modern writers of eminence, which give an affecting view of this subject, will be found in the note at the end of the volume.

part of it which is now before us has been decidedly placed in doubt, and requires to be viewed in the light of modern times. The claims of Egypt, for instance, have been revived, and enforced by apparently additional evidence: we have, therefore, felt it necessary to enter somewhat at length on this subject, as preliminary to the investigation of Greek and Roman writings.

Moreover, since the time of the early apologists, and even since that of eminent writers in this department of the last century, important additions have been made to our knowledge on some other subjects not unconnected with the history of the ancient heathen. Our acquaintance with the ancient races, in the principles of their language, in their affinities, and in their monumental history, although the investigations respecting them have been connected with much that was extravagant in theory, has been placed upon a more solid basis than it had ever been before. And though the truth has been subjected to an ordeal which for a time gave some anxiety to its friends, it has come out of it established almost beyond the reach of scepticism.

After such researches have been made, and brought to conclusions so satisfactory, the present subject may be again looked into with advantage.

And though it will perhaps be found that some of the arguments employed in earliest times, and some of the theories which more recently have been propounded, must be abandoned, it will appear that, on the whole, the position which maintains that the sacred Scriptures have been the source of all the best parts of Heathen Philosophy has been more strengthened by what is gained than weakened by what is lost.

The Christian Revelation was explicitly declared to be intended for all mankind. It commanded all men everywhere to receive it, and to adopt it as the measure of their hopes, the guide of their opinions, and the rule of their lives. And its influence on the nations among whom it chiefly found its way was soon apparent.

But perhaps the very circumstance that, while it gave no indulgence to human pride or luxury, it *commanded* obedience, may account for the fact, that long after it had made its way into the hearts of the multitude of all nations, it was resisted by those who considered themselves the instructors of mankind. Yet even on them its influence was so far apparent, that when at length they began to enter the lists against it, they furnished themselves with weapons from its armoury. With regard to the more ancient revelation, it was at least not so apparent

that it claimed authority over the opinions and conduct of mankind at large. It was not obviously *enjoined* on any other people than those to whom it was immediately given.

But it was supremely worthy of universal acceptance; and, as will be shewn, the arrangements of Providence were such as to give to other nations the best opportunities of availing themselves of it. Accordingly, as might be expected, while its influence on the mass of other nations—except, perhaps, to a certain extent, from the preaching of Pythagoras—and on the conduct of those who were nearest its light, is scarcely discernible, their philosophers were willing to borrow from its stores, unchecked by any demands not pleasant to their vanity. It was used by them as a common good, which they might adapt at their pleasure to their own speculations.

It is doubtless true, that some of the Mosaic institutions were intended to be peculiar to the Jewish people, but these formed only a small part of the entire Revelation made before the appearance of our Saviour. And some even of these exhibited symbols of which the key was furnished to those who understood its statements respecting the nature of God and his worship.

The Mosaic Revelation contained an authentic and *declarative* account of what had been originally made known to the

human race respecting the nature of God, the creation of mankind, and the universal principles of morality, which had once been written on the hearts of all men, but which had faded or become effaced.

And it was so far as a whole from being destined to become obsolete, that accessions were continually made to it, and it was constantly *developed* from the same inspiration which bestowed the original germs. While the framework of *Judaism* was giving way, the Revelation of divine truth continued to grow in all its divinest attributes, and to be more distinctly recognized as the bestowment of the Spirit of God.

The Christian Revelation, though again making a large accession to the knowledge of divine things, was so far only an expansion of the former system of truth, and is occupied, to a great extent, in making more clear, and exhibiting more fully, what the Spirit of Revelation had already spoken. And nothing can be plainer, than that our Saviour and his disciples recommended the ancient Revelation to mankind as the divine foundation out of which the Gospel rose. In this light the Old Testament has always been regarded and cherished in proportion as Christianity itself has ruled the opinions and affections of mankind.

CHAPTER I.

HEBREW REVELATION NOT INTENDED TO BE CONFINED TO THE JEWS.

IF, in the inscrutable way of Providence, it had appeared from Scripture itself, that it was plainly intended to *exclude* the nations from the benefit of this earlier light, it would have been our duty to bow with submission to such a mystery. But this is manifestly far from being the case. It is, on the contrary, evident that the chosen people were intended to be the depositories of this divine bestowment, with the view that they should not only cherish it and enjoy its benefits themselves, but communicate its light to surrounding nations. The promise made to Abraham, and repeated to Isaac and Jacob, that in them and their descendants all the families of the earth should be blessed, though doubtless referring for its complete fulfilment to the Christian Dispensation, and to developments of Divine Providence yet to come; might well refer to the fact that their great distinction above all others would be, that "to them were committed the Oracles of God."

And whatever other ideas may be included in the destination mentioned, Exod. xix. 6, "Ye shall be a kingdom of priests," it can scarcely be doubted that the function of the priestly office which made them the ministers and stewards of the mysteries of God, was especially referred to.

The object of their selection and consecration as a peculiar people was that which is mentioned by Isaiah: "This people have I ^{Is. xliii. 21.} formed for myself, that they may shew forth my praise," or, according to the words of the LXX., which St Peter has partly used, λαὸν μου ^{1 Ep. ii. 9.} ὃν περιποιησάμην, τὰς ἀρετὰς μου διηγεῖσθαι. St Peter, addressing himself to those early Christians who were appointed to be the first leaven of Christianity, combines the passage in Exodus with that in Isaiah: ὑμεῖς δὲ γένος ἐκλεκτὸν, βασιλείον ιεράτευμα, ἔθνος ἅγιον, λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν ὅπως τὰς ἀρετὰς ἐξαγγείλητε τοῦ ἐκ σκότους ὑμᾶς καλέσαντος¹.

In both these cases the main idea seems to

¹ This passage has been strangely perverted by writers of the Lutheran Church, and, in fact, made the basis of a system the very opposite of what is implied in the language itself—viz. that on the publication of the Gospel there was no longer to be any peculiar order of the ministry, but that every man was to be his own priest. In Bunsen's strange work, *The Church of the Future*, this sense is confidently taken as the only one: Was there no Order of Priests among the Hebrews, when as a nation they were expected to be a kingdom of Priests?

be, that the people thus distinguished and *consecrated* by special divine communications, were thereby put in trust with a sacred deposit, of whose blessings they were to be the stewards and dispensers.

Deut. iv. 6,
8.

And this is in accordance with the charge which Moses gave to the Israelites at the close of his life: "*Keep and do them*; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in *the sight of the nations*, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great which hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? and what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?"—*i. e.* their wisdom would not be displayed in speculating upon them, but in *keeping* them, and putting them into practice.

CHAPTER II.

ARRANGEMENTS OF PROVIDENCE.

IT is plain then that, in connexion with this revelation, the Israelites had a *duty* to perform to surrounding nations, as well as to themselves. And it is interesting to observe the peculiar arrangements of Providence by which this duty was facilitated.

It has often been remarked, with regard to the *Christian* Revelation, that it was placed exactly in the *focus* of the civilized world; and when a large mass of the Jewish people had become evangelized, they were soon scattered to all the winds of Heaven, and carried with them in all directions the holy light by which they had become luminous. It is scarcely less a matter of devout admiration, that in later times the country which has become the emporium of the world, whose inhabitants are wafted, and now almost *spirited*, in all directions on an element peculiarly their own—a country to which a dominion has been all but miraculously given over heathen nations occupying large portions of the globe—should be the abode of the purest form of Christianity, and—with all that country's de-

Christi-
anity at first
and in these
later times
placed in
the focus of
the civilised
world.

ficiencies—far more impressed with its value and more fertile in its fruits than any other nation of mankind.

The same
was true of
the more
ancient re-
velation.

But advantages of the same kind were in a high degree conferred on those who were the original depositories of the Divine Word. The land of Palestine was, as Heeren has remarked, exactly the boundary-line between the eastern and the western world, and there was everything not only in the position but in the character of the people, as part of the Semitic family, adapted to diffuse what was for this purpose committed to them.

Character
of the
people.
As compar-
ed with the
Egyptians.

Nat. Hist.
of Man,
p. 150.

With regard to the people, their character in this respect is best perceived in contrast with their neighbours the Egyptians. "Though inhabiting from immemorial times," says Dr Prichard, "regions in juxtaposition, and almost contiguous to each other, no two races of men can be more strongly contrasted than were the ancient Egyptians and the Syro-Arabian races: one nation full of energy, of restless activity, changing many times their manner of existence—sometimes nomad, *i. e.* feeding their flocks in desert places—now settled and cultivating the earth, and filling their land with populous villages and towns and fenced cities—then spreading themselves, impelled with the love of glory and zeal of proselytism, over distant countries;—the other

reposing ever in luxurious ease and wealth on the rich soil watered by their slimy river, never quitting it for a foreign clime, or displaying, unless forced, the least change in their position or habits of life. The intellectual character, the metaphysical belief and the religious sentiments and practices of the two nations, were equally diverse; one adoring an invisible and eternal Spirit at whose Almighty word the universe started into existence, 'and the morning-stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy,' the other adorning splendid temples with costly magnificence, in which with mysterious and grotesque rites they paid a strange and portentous worship to some foul and grovelling object—a snake, a tortoise, a crocodile, or an ape."

This contrast is important when the question is raised, whether Egypt or Palestine, the subjects of Rhampsinnitus and Cheops, the patrons of the Eleusinian mysteries and the builders of the Pyramids, or of David and Solomon, whose prayer was "that thy way may be known upon earth, and thy saving health among all nations," and who built a temple to Him, whom heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain;—became the source to other nations of wholesome instruction on divine subjects.

The close connexion of the Hebrews, from

Connexion
with the
Phœni-
cians.

the time in which their religious belief became established and copiously developed, with the *Phœnicians*, is a most remarkable circumstance, and has all the appearance of a divine arrangement for promoting the diffusion of that "saving health" which they desired might be known among all nations.

Vol. I. ch. 2.

On this subject we have the following remarks in Heeren's *Asia*: "One of the most interesting spectacles which history affords us, is the spread of nations by peaceable colonization...Phœnicians and Greeks, no less than the British and the Dutch, soon discover the necessity for foreign settlements; and notwithstanding all the abuses to which they are liable, it is still undeniable that not only their own civilization, but in a great measure the civilization of the whole human race, depends very much on these peaceful means of advancement...Tyre and Sidon yielded to their fate, but they had the happiness before their fall to see flourishing around them, in their hundreds of colonies, a numerous progeny."

p. 311.

"The foundation of most of these certainly took place in the flourishing period of Phœnicia, during which the trade and navigation of Tyre made such wonderful advances, *i.e.* from the reign of David to that of Cyrus."

p. 323.

"When the boundaries of the Jewish empire under David had been so extended by the

subjugation of the Edomites as to take in Eloth and Ezion-Geber, on the North coast of the Arabian Gulf, the Phœnicians did not let the opportunity escape of opening the way to them by treaty; and the navigation which they in common with Solomon carried on upon the Red Sea, drew so many of them to these cities, that they may be fairly regarded as their colonies. "The fact that Palestine was the granary p. 363. of the Phœnicians, explains, in the clearest manner, the good understanding and lasting peace that prevailed between the two nations. It is a striking fact in the Jewish history, that with all other nations around them they lived in continued warfare, and that under David and Solomon they became conquerors and subdued considerable countries. And yet with their nearest neighbours the Phœnicians they never engaged in hostilities."

Of the latter of these facts there can be no doubt, but the former is expressed too strongly. Up to the time of David they were only subduing the nations within their own natural boundary, afterwards they only defended that boundary. Heeren also cites 1 Kings ix. 18, p. 366. "Solomon built Baalath and Tadmor in the desert," to shew that "Heliopolis and Palmyra were built at the time when the land-trade of the Phœnicians was rapidly spreading, and

that a share in this trade entered into the views of Solomon their builder."

It appears therefore, at a time when the possession of religious truth was an important part of their distinction among the nations, and when "there came of all people to hear the wisdom" of their king, their *opportunities* at least were of a high order for communicating this knowledge.

And it must be observed that the feeling of *exclusiveness*, which in later ages might interfere with this duty, is not so apparent in these early times. Their sacred traditions, too, were at that time not the possession merely of a sacred order. The mind of every child was imbued with them from his earliest infancy. "Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." They constituted the principal theme of a high order of poetry, and among their sacred lyrics the idea is ever present, of proclaiming by all means and to all people their sacred traditions. "Make known his deeds among the nations. . . . talk ye of all his wondrous works."

Deut. vi. 7.

1 Chron.
xvi. 9.

Ps. xcv.
1. 3.

"O sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord all the earth. Sing unto the

Lord, and praise his name ; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his honour unto the heathen, and his wonders unto all people." In short, it was in full accordance with the spirit of their institutions, that every citizen should have his mind occupied with these subjects, and should bear his part in proclaiming them to others. And we may here observe, that this important element in the education of the people is so like what Plato has recommended for his Republic, that the latter has all the appearance of having been suggested by the former. Plato would banish from the education of youth most of the popular poetry, and substitute lyrical compositions, embodying the civil and moral precepts in which they were to be reared.

It is next to impossible, if this was only in a small degree carried out by the Hebrews, that in their extensive intercourse with foreign nations they should not have communicated something of their sacred knowledge.

The Phœnicians before the time of David had certainly not confined themselves to merchandise. They introduced not only letters—*γράμματα*—but also literature—*διδασκαλία*—into Greece, according to Herodotus, in which at that time was essentially included their religious philosophy : and, if there is any truth in what is stated by Josephus about the kind of intercourse which existed in the time of Solo-

mon between the Hebrews and the Phœnicians, it produced not only a commerce of merchandize, but also of their literature: and the high point to which we know the Hebrews carried their secular philosophy would tend to recommend, if not to the practice of other nations, at least to the use of the learned among them, the sacred knowledge which so distinguished this people.

The course taken in the migrations from the East, favourable to this object.

It is of some interest to our present enquiry to notice also the remarkable arrangements of divine Providence, by which all the nations which were afterwards enlightened by Christianity were successively brought from the far East, where the ancient tradition had been either lost or volatilized into fantastic dreams, to the immediate neighbourhood of that country where it shone in all its purity, and was replenished with ever-fresh bestowments, and into immediate contact with those who had benefitted by it.

Vol. i. p. 161, &c.

The venerable J. Grimm, in his last work, "The History of the Germanic Languages," has given a copious account of these migrations.

He considers it established "that all the tribes of Europe have in very early ages made their way from Asia. An irresistible impulse," says he, "*which it is not easy to explain*, brought them constantly from East to West."

p. 163.

"The Greeks first appear, extending their

history back to about 1800 years B. C., spread over Asia Minor, Macedonia, Thessalia, Bœotia, and the Peloponnese."

The Romans next, whose history is reckoned from 754 B. C.: "their first immigration," says Grimm, "seems to have been from Ituræa (on the N.E. frontier of Syria)." They appear for many ages to have had scarcely any literature, but from the time of Numa to have had notions of the Deity and the nature of His worship, in accordance with those which Pythagoras afterwards introduced into Italy, and derived from the same source.

The Celts are the third people of European history; they flourished from the sixth to the fourth century B. C. Their language, though now classed with the Indo-European, has a remarkable affinity with the Semitic, forming, according to Dr. Prichard, an intermediate link between these families. "They penetrated," says Grimm, "in early times farther to the West than any other race, being in the time of Herodotus ἔσχατοι πρὸς ἡλίου δυσμέων."

Celtic Nations, p. 191.
Vol. II. p. 33.

Though the Celts thus did not remain in the way of direct contact with the East, they appear to have taken with them, together with some barbarous portions of Phœnician theology, some purer ideas of the nature of God.

Then come the Germans, Lithuanians, Slavonians, Finns, Thracians, and Scythians.

All these appear, at one time or other, to have approached more or less nearly to those countries which were more enlightened, and exhibit more or less of the knowledge existing there, according as they remained in the neighbourhood, or fixed their place of abode at a greater distance.

Vol. iv. pp.
93, 95.

The Thracians, who became the Gothic nation, are distinguished by Herodotus as *οἱ ἀθανατίζοντες*. Their god Zalmoxis, according to him, had been in the service of Pythagoras, and had come among the Getes, to whom he taught this doctrine. They were the first of the heathen nations who were converted to Christianity.

The Saxons also were descendants of Getes and Scythians who early enjoyed a better light.

In regard to these migrating races, it may be remarked, that most of them have traditions of philosophic teachers rising up among them, whose doctrine may be traced more or less distinctly to the same source.

These remarkable arrangements of Divine Providence, like others of a similar kind, appear to have been intended to afford to these nations an opportunity of benefitting by the inestimable treasures of which the Hebrews were made the stewards, and to prepare them for that more perfect form of truth which they afterwards adopted as their faith.

CHAPTER III.

ORIGIN OF RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY.

THERE are two suppositions on which it ^{Alleged origin of philosophy.} has been attempted to account for the origin and spread of those opinions among the more civilized nations, which the Church has always regarded as the immediate gift of God, or as indirectly obtained from a sacred source.

The one is—that each nation of mankind, ^{Invented.} as it has emerged from barbarism, has invented a theology for itself.

The other is—that nations of vast antiquity ^{Imported from ancient heathen nations.} have, either by their own discovery or otherwise, obtained knowledge on these subjects, and from them have been derived the religious opinions of more modern nations.

The first of these notions depends upon the assumption that men have emerged from ^{Men not savages originally.} a state of brutal barbarism, and either tacitly or expressly adopts the base idea expressed ^{Sat. i. iii. 100.} by Horace :

Præpserunt primis animalia terris
Mutum et turpe pecus.

an idea which is in all probability due to the Egyptians, who created not only men, but even

the gods themselves, from the mud of their own Nile, and which afterwards formed one of the chief points of the Epicurean doctrine. Thus Lucretius :

Bk. v. 793. Linquitur ut merito maternum nomen adepta
Terra sit, e terra quoniam sint cuncta creata.
Multaque nunc etiam existunt animalia terris
Imbribus, et calido solis concreta vapore.

* * * * *

819. Quare etiam atque etiam maternum nomen adepta
Terra tenet merito, quoniam genus ipsa creavit
Humanum.

Proved on
ethnical
grounds,

The theory however—that the human race has emerged from a state of proper barbarism—may be safely considered as exploded, and that on purely scientific grounds.

Researches into the physical history of man have gone hand-in-hand with investigations of his language at once extensive and minute, and both have tended to prove, beyond all reasonable doubt, in the first place, that at least all those nations, with whose literature and religion we are best acquainted, must have had a common origin.

that men
have de-
praved.

But the same investigations also shew, that so far from having ascended in the course of ages from an almost brutal type to his present condition, the general course of things has been the reverse.

The African nations may at present fairly

be considered as occupying a lower grade of physical and moral condition than any of those nations have ever been known or even traditionally reported to have presented. But it has been shewn with regard to some, even of the African tribes, that they have *sunk* to this condition within historic times.

The Bushmen, as has been fully established, are the remains of Hottentot clans, who subsisted anciently, like all the tribes of Africa, chiefly by rearing sheep and cattle, but who have been *reduced* from the life of peaceful herdsmen to the condition of hunting and predatory savages. The cruelty and oppression of European colonists during successive ages, has been the main cause of this calamity. The original Hottentots before the settlement of the Dutch were a numerous and happy people, divided into tribes under the patriarchal government of chiefs or elders; they were brave in war, but they were gentle in their dispositions—humane and upright in their conduct. They were also far from deficient in intellect: their name for the Deity is—*The Beautiful*. Prichard's Nat. Hist. of Man, p. 310, &c.

This people, deprived of their flocks and herds and hunted for their lives, have been gradually transformed from a mild, confiding race of shepherds, to fierce vindictive savages, under the name of Bushmen, on whom the Prichard, p. 316.

further injury has been inflicted, of denying that they are of the *Race Adamique* !

Barbarism,
how pro-
duced.

Now this process, which has been going on almost under our own eyes, is but a type of the history of so-called barbarous nations. Tribes who were either physically stronger or more advanced in the use of arms, have constantly expelled others who were less so, from their homes, called forth into violent exercise the fierce and malignant passions of their nature, and driven them to contend with inhuman deprivations, till a course of ages has seen them transformed from human beings to savages, in whom the human nature is scarcely to be recognized.

Wherever ancient monuments remain to shew the earlier type of nations now both physically and morally debased, they invariably prove that that type approached a standard of the higher order.

On philolo-
gical
grounds.

The result of investigation as to the *languages* of mankind, of which the monuments are far more numerous and more ancient, has been to establish this principle still more strongly. The earlier forms of language, as far as the perfection of its *artificial structure is concerned*, are found to exhibit the higher type which more modern nations have in one sense depraved ; the whole of the European family of languages have in this sense *descended* from

a type of most perfect structure represented by the earliest Sanscrit and the Zend.

All this is in confirmation of the universal Tradition, tradition, according to which a golden, silver, brass, and iron age have succeeded each other in the condition of mankind.

But it is still more certain, if we take Revelation as a standard of religious knowledge, that the races of mankind have shewn a constant tendency to corrupt and deprave those elements of truth which had been the common possession of the human race. And with regard to this, it is clear that in all cases where the Divine bestowment was not sustained and replenished by other than human means, men have invariably become spiritually barbarized in proportion as they were civilly refined.

The striking account which St. Paul has given in the First Epistle to the Romans, of the process by which the truth of God has become corrupted, refers especially to the history of the most civilized nations.

It was not in the absence of intellectual habits and pursuits, which may be supposed to have attended a rude and uncivilized state of society, that this corruption began. On the contrary, the—*πρώτον ψεύδος*—the *πρωτοπήμων*, Æsch. Ag. 203; and Klausen there. “the primal infatuation” of men was, that they dared to speculate on subjects beyond

the reach of human intellect, and thus adulterating the divine traditions which had been handed down to them, ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν. They became vain, false and foolish, in their *speculations*. "They became foolish by professing themselves to be wise, and they changed the glory of the Invisible God into the likeness of corruptible man, and of birds, and of quadrupeds and of reptiles." The universal effect of such speculations was, *and always has been*, to darken the minds of men with regard to the spiritual world. "Their foolish heart was darkened." This process is exhibited in a striking manner by Dr. Tholuck, in Neander's *Denkwürdigkeiten*. He says, "That a higher condition of the human race has preceded the lower one, is a truth which at all times by the profoundest men has been acknowledged. As the child can only become a man amongst men, so it is only in communion with beings truly human that a human being can be reared. We must therefore either assume an eternal existence of a human society, or a point of time in which God himself brought into existence the human being already reared (*gebildet*) in his present relations of life. As then the Scripture assures us that the first human pair became fallen from a holy life in God into one of sinful *self-sufficiency*, we are

Vol. I. p.
234.
Obs. note
1.

bound to believe that man, though fallen thus from his original purity, brought with him into his fallen state many high qualifications and powers from that more happy time. If it were not so, the most important appearances of the most ancient history would be inexplicable. Whence comes it, if the original races were barbarians and half brutal, that among them, state, morals, science, art, is all founded upon religion, and the worship of God is the centre of their entire spiritual life? Heeren says, respecting the influence of religion on the policy of nations, 'From the history of human policy it is manifest, that religion possesses a higher political importance the further we go back into history.'

Tholuck therefore concludes, that "An ^{p. 2.} impartial examination of heathenism will afford the important result, that heathenism is a corrupted truth, a divine utterance heard falsely, which in its own nature comes from God."

After giving a paraphrase of the passage ^{p. 14.} in the Epistle to the Romans already referred to, he says "In this way the regards of men became withdrawn from the spiritual world and directed entirely to the physical, and no Deity was recognized but what there appeared. Hence the notion of Pantheism. On the other hand, those who could not sufficiently

generalize confined their thoughts to particular outward phænomena, and hence arose Polytheism."

p. 15.

"The doctrine of Metempsychosis among the ancient Indians was a kind of mythic representation of *the fall of man*. Menu, the lawgiver of the Indians, says, 'Surrounded with various forms of darkness, conscious of their evil deeds and of their destiny, they are all endowed with capacities of pleasure and pain. To this destiny they are continually moving, while they sink from the nature of Deity to that of plants, in this fearful world of being which is continually sinking towards corruption.' But this mythic representation in time became a physical notion, and among the later Platonists a part of their fatalism."

p. 73.

"In the religion of the East," says Tholuck, "we have a picture of Oriental life; speculative men, in a climate where labour and activity were impossible, indulged their warm imaginations in speculations which were destitute of practical value.....The Greeks, on the other hand, looked on the material world till the spiritual became dim; they became more and more captivated with the beauty of external form, till their religion became *sensuous*. This state of things was more dangerous than total ignorance, as it is always found that

p. 76.

error is more pernicious when connected with a portion of truth than when alone."

"Something like what took place among the Greeks," he observes, "has taken place in our day. Men have given themselves up to a refined *sentimentalism*, and to æsthetic aspirations, tinged with the hue of Christianity, which only empurples the wound without healing it, or which adorns the house for the reception of the demon, who returns from the wilderness with seven other spirits of impurity.....The Greeks did more than this; their ungodly artists used their theology as the materials of their art, and presented the immoralities which had become part of that theology in an attractive form, by which they gave them a kind of consecration."

"But the practice which prevailed in Egypt, and still exists in India, of representing the Deity under the form of beasts, is still more abominable; and the heathen Philostratus has justly remarked, that by dwelling on such objects the human mind becomes disqualified for forming any worthy conception of the Divine Nature." It appears therefore that so far from having *invented* their religious notions when emerging from a state of barbarism, it has been the *civilized* man who, by *speculating* on the traditions which his forefathers held sacred, has invariably corrupted what he has

thus tampered with. And since his moral nature became debased, in proportion as his notions of divine things became less pure, till he became given over to vile affections, the imagery with which he surrounded himself became the visible type of a state of heart which had excluded the Deity, and filled itself with all that was most opposite to His nature.

However general among mankind the notion of a Deity may be, and the possession of truths similar to those in Revelation, there is everything in the history of the human mind to shew that these are things which "had not entered into the heart of man" by any suggestions of nature, and to make it likely that it was as true of them as of the glorious doctrines of Christianity, that "God had revealed them by His Spirit."

Ideen für
Geschichte
der Philoso-
phie, Vol.
II. p. 288.

The *premises*, it must be allowed, everywhere exist in the appearances of nature for some right conclusions as to the being and nature of God, but it is certain, especially with the theory of an original state of savage barbarism, that these conclusions would never have been formed. "Religion," says Herder, "has its traces among the poorest and rudest tribes. Whence did these people obtain them? Has every wretch discovered for himself a kind of natural theology? These people,

struggling for subsistence, make no discoveries, they follow in everything the traditions of their fathers. *Tradition is as much the mother of their religion as of their language.*"

CHAPTER IV.

CLAIMS OF ANCIENT HEATHEN NATIONS.

CERTAIN as it thus appears that men have not invented their religion, but that the Almighty *endowed* mankind at his creation with a sufficient amount of knowledge on these sacred subjects; the question now comes, whether any of the ancient nations were so far exempted from the common depravity of corrupting their traditions, as to have preserved them in sufficient purity to qualify such nations for being the instructors of mankind on divine subjects.

This credit has been given in recent times to *India*, and was claimed by the later *Egyptians*; a claim which some modern writers of respectability allow.

The religious knowledge ascribed to Egypt was imported.

At the very time when genuine Egyptianism had become so foully corrupt that it stank in the nostrils of surrounding heathenism, but when under Macedonian rule Egypt had become the emporium of foreign learning, and even of religious light; she began to plume herself with other feathers than her own, and to claim as her native progeny doctrines and

attainments which had only sojourned there. And strange to say, this claim, as we shall see below, was admitted and even zealously given her by foreign heathen, especially when heathenism was driven to take desperate steps in its defence against Christianity. In modern times the increased acquaintance which we have made with Hindoo literature and with Egyptian monuments, has much excited the fancy of some who have been engaged in these researches. And while with grudging admission, or with obvious scepticism, they have almost ignored the genuine historic character of the Hebrew Scriptures, they have laboured to extract from the mass of Egyptian and Eastern extravagance, the elements of that truth which is embodied in the sacred writings. We may well say, as Clemens Alexandrinus did to the heathen of his time, *πῇ μύθοις κενοῖς πεπιστεύκατε, ἀληθείας δὲ ὑμῖν τὸ πρόσωπον τὸ φαιδρὸν, μονὸν, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐπίπλαστον εἶναι δοκεῖ, καὶ τοῖς ἀπιστίας ὑποπέπτωκεν ὀφθαλμοῖς*; How comes it that ye have put your faith in empty fables, while the beaming countenance of truth alone as it seems is regarded as false, and has been looked upon with eyes of unbelief?

Modern
fancies
about In-
dian and
Egyptian
learning,

Cohort. ad
Gent. p. 2.
(Sylb.)

A more mature acquaintance however with both Indian and Egyptian monuments of antiquity has been far from sustaining in the minds of the soundest investigators the confi-

have given
way to
maturer
knowledge.

dence with which men looked to them for the *primordia* of religion and civilization.

Lectures,
Vol. I. p. 63.

On this subject Dr. Wiseman remarks:

Variety of
the me-
thods
which have
tended to
this result.

“When I consider how many different men have laboured almost unwittingly to produce these different results . . . when I see them all, like emmets, bearing their small particular loads, or removing some little obstruction, and crossing and re-crossing one the other as though in total confusion, and to the utter derangement of each other's projects; yet when I discover that from all this, there results a plan of exceeding regularity, order and beauty, it doth seem to me as though I read therein the signs of a higher instinct, and of a directing influence over the thoughtless counsels of men, which can bring them to great and useful purposes—and such methinks is to be found in the history of all sound learning . . . I cannot persuade myself that there is not an overseeing eye in this ordering of things dissimilar, to one great end, when I see that this great end is the confirmation of God's holy Word.”

These two nations have been distinguished doubtless for having in very early times *corrupted* their religious faith, and in the case of Egypt, to a degree that makes it quite out of the question that that country should have afforded a ray of real light to surrounding

nations. But the pretensions of both countries to an antiquity of letters and civilization higher than that of the Hebrews, have by most sober men been rejected.

“There have been,” says Dr. Wiseman, Vol. II. p. 1.
 “learned and acute investigators, who, having peculiar ends to gain in their researches, have allowed themselves to be borne away by these representations — have admitted as history what was only mythological fable,—have calculated upon dates which were the purest fiction ; and, not granting to the Jewish books the authority which they allowed to the Indian Vedas, or the Egyptian lists of kings, have most inconsistently condemned our Sacred Records, because they imagined at first sight that they agreed not with those of other nations.”

“There were to be found astronomical processes of the most refined character, requiring observations at epochs incalculably remote one from the other ; there were periods or cycles of time, necessarily framed when the state of the heavens was countless ages younger than at present ; there were books manifestly written many thousand years before the West gave any signs of human life ; there were monuments obviously erected ages before the desolating flood is said to have swept over the face of the earth ; there, in fine, were long

Pretended
 Indian and
 Egyptian
 antiquity.

lists of kings, and even of dynasties, well attested in the annals of nations, which must reach back far beyond the epoch assigned, in the comparatively modern book of Moses, to the creation of the world."

p. 16. "And now, what has become of all these wonders?" Dr. Wiseman then shews how Bailly undertook the task of verifying mathematically the Indian calculations; that Delambre, however, in his *History of Ancient Astronomy*, "laid open one by one the inaccuracies committed by Bailly, in the statement of the question, and his gratuitous assumption of the data on which he conducted them. He shews that there is no ground on earth to admit the truth of the supposed observations."

Refuted on
scientific
grounds.

p. 19. But that the publication of a valuable collection of Indian mathematical treatises by Mr. Colebrooke, gave an opportunity to the *Edinburgh Review* to exalt the antiquity of Hindoo science, and to censure Delambre, whereas Colebrooke's work affords strong presumptive grounds for supposing the comparatively modern origin of mathematics in India.

To this Delambre replied. And our countryman Mr. Davis arrived at similar conclusions with him as to the imperfection of Indian astronomy, by shewing from the *Surya Siddhanta*, an astronomical work supposed to have been inspired, that the bases for their calcu-

lations were *assumed* arbitrarily, and not selected by actual observation.

But "Mr. Bentley," says Dr. Wiseman, ^{p. 24.} "must be acknowledged to have most earnestly and most successfully studied this and other important works of Indian astronomy with a view to determine the true antiquity of the science." Mr. Bentley concludes that the author of this most ancient book lived in a comparatively *late period of the Christian era.*

The *Ramayana*, or epic poem, which cele- ^{p. 28.} brates the Indian hero Rama, gives a minute description of the heavens at his birth and upon his reaching his twenty-first year, and the result is, that such a state could only have occurred about 961 years before Christ.

"There is one Indian legend of consider- ^{Ib.} able importance, the age of which Mr. Bentley endeavours to decide by astronomical computation; that is the story of Krishna, the Indian Apollo—an avatar of the Deity." In his life there is a remarkable resemblance to our Saviour's history, and this of course was seized upon by enemies of Christianity to the prejudice of the Evangelical narrative. But here also the configuration of the heavens at the time of his birth is given, and from this it appears that no such state could have existed except in the sixth century of the Christian era.

Laplace himself remarks, “*Les Tables astronomiques des Hindous, auxquelles on avait attribué une antiquité prodigieuse, ont été construites dans le septième siècle de l'ère vulgaire.*”

Wiseman,
p. 33.

It appears too, from Sir Wm. Jones's researches, who to say the least was not inclined unduly to depress the Indian antiquity, that the utmost extent to which the annals of Hindoostan can possibly be stretched with regard to probability, allows of the establishment of a government in that country no earlier than 2000 years before Christ. Thus the millions of years which had been claimed and conceded for their reckoning, are certainly reduced within a compass that is no longer formidable, and the reckoning still allowed them is probably much too high. That there is much that is interesting in the literature of the Hindoos, and many remains in its earlier portions of pure traditional truth, cannot be denied. But after the several colonies from its neighbourhood had made their way to the West, and the Hellenic family had adopted the sensuous theology of the Epic poetry, it is impossible to shew that the Indian philosophy, debased as it had then become, and inaccessible, had any the slightest share in the reform of the Greek philosophy, which took place from the time of

Wiseman,
p. 36.

Pythagoras, and still less that it afforded a single idea to the ancient Hebrew doctrines.

But Egypt is in the near neighbourhood ^{The claims of Egypt} of the Holy Land, and the claims of this country therefore require to be more carefully looked into, because, as we have remarked, there were not wanting advocates of heathenism, after the rise of Christianity, who referred to that country as the mother of their religion—even of those parts of it which had been at first derived from the Hebrew Scriptures, and afterwards polished by Christianity—and there are still not wanting writers of eminence who ascribe an enormous antiquity to the religious and political civilization of Egypt, and reckon that other nations are largely indebted to that country.

Where the materials for a real acquaintance with this subject, abundant as they ^{to pre-Mosaic antiquity, not allowed by Wilkinson;} have recently become, have fallen into the hands of sober men, no such conclusions have been obtained. Col. Wilkinson, though an ardent Egyptiologist, in his copious and luminous account of this subject, had shewn that discoveries made in Egypt contained much to *confirm* various statements in the Mosaic writings, but yet afforded no warrant for conclusions favourable to their vast claim to antiquity.

But since his investigations, the task of ^{but contended for}

by modern
Germany,
&c.

fresh discoveries has fallen into the hands of a people, in whom, as it seems, extravagant speculation is the besetting sin.

Lepsius,

It appears that since the labours of Young and Champollion, of Wilson and others, Richard Lepsius, by support of the Prussian government, has been and still is engaged in collecting facts in Egypt; and that following steps already traced, he has made great advances towards an acquaintance with the language of various kinds of Egyptian monuments.

and Bun-
sen.

The task of *theorizing* on the result of his discoveries has fallen to his friend the Chevalier Bunsen. No one who is acquainted with the other writings of this eminent personage would feel that subjects were very safe in his hands which required a sober *induction*; and the elaborate work in which these speculations are embodied, which appeared a year or two since, will we think produce no impression so strong in this country, as that everything has been sacrificed which makes against his *theory*.

Bunsen's
theory.

The subject of Bunsen's work, is "The position of Egypt in the History of the World." He had apparently in this investigation advantages which were to a great extent new, *viz.* a more complete acquaintance with the ancient monuments of Egypt, and

a greater knowledge than was ever possessed before of the *language* in which their records are contained. Bunsen sets out with bewailing the *one-sidedness* of Wilkinson and others, who with a large part of these materials have investigated the same subject. That is, they have shewn some respect to the Mosaic history. Accordingly, the Chevalier seems to have thought it only fair to take entirely *the other side*; and by exhibiting discrepancies in the chronology of the Old Testament, he thinks himself entitled to conclude, that the Hebrew Scriptures contain no *historical* statement of time; that some of the most important definitions of this kind are *unhistorical speculations*; besides which, he so deals with any of the facts recorded by Moses, which stand in his way, as to shew that the Old Testament is only comparatively historical. The *theory* of Bunsen is an enormously high point for the civilization of Egypt and for its influence on the rest of the human race.

He says, "The period I must ascribe to it ^{Vol. II. p. 2.} in the history of the world, lies so far from the utmost limits of critical historical documents which at present exist, that many prefer beforehand to refer it to the mythic period before the historical."

In short, we have, according to him, ^{Vol. III. p. 21.} above 3500 years B.C. for the date of the

Vol. 1.
p. 405.

flourishing period of the Egyptian empire, when the genius of the people had already acquired, in their written language, in their acquaintance with the arts, and above all, *their wonderful religious system*, "*The Inheritance of primeval Asia.*"

Kosmos,
Vol. 11.
p. 112.

And on his authority, Humboldt remarks, "In the early twilight of *history* we perceive certain shining points already established as centres of civilization; such was Egypt at least 5000 years before our era."

A pure speculation.

Vol. 1.
p. 58.

It will be seen however, in the first place, by a few admissions of Bunsen himself, that all the additional information gained on the subject of Egyptian monuments, has given him *no materials* for forming his judgment which have not equally been in possession of the learned for many centuries, and which have not been examined with skill and learning. He says, "One of the most important branches of contemporary monuments for antiquarian research are the *stelé*, stone tablets, with the statement of the year of the government of the kings under whom they were erected."

His confessed difficulties.
p. 59.

"These do not supply us with history, nor even with chronology; but as we possess remains of *historical tradition*, by comparing the accounts of historians with these contemporary monuments, we may hope to restore at least the chronology."

In speaking of *their sacred books*, he says, p. 49.
 "These contain no history of the Egyptian people, as do the books of the Old Testament. The idea of the people, and still more that of the people's God, the Creator of heaven and earth, is wanting."

"On this account we need not wonder p. 50.
 that we hear of no historical work before the time of Manetho; on this account, too, they ^{about 250, B.C.} had no connected chronology, like those after the years of Nabonator, or of the Olympiads, or of the building of Rome."

"It is certain that at the beginning of p. 92.
 the dominion of the Ptolemies there was no work on Egyptian subjects accessible to the Greeks, either about their doctrines or their history and chronology."

Respecting the annals of the Priests he p. 180.
 says, "As these monuments are destitute of the living traditions with which they were connected, the lists of kings and series of years are mere skeletons without life and living connexion. Names without events, dates without history, and without intelligible chronology such as history requires."

Now, as Bunsen says very truly, "The ^{His main reliance on Manetho, and later writers.} whole *possibility* of the Egyptian as well as the Greek tradition (*i. e.* of Manetho, Herodotus, Diodorus,) respecting the ancient dynasty, depends entirely on the question, What

was the value of the knowledge of the Egyptians of the new dynasty respecting their ancient chronology?" Observe, Bunsen makes these dynasties to have been separated for nearly 1000 years, by a dynasty of foreigners, and he allows that "the Egyptians, like all other nations of antiquity, except the Jews, magnified the duration of their antiquity, or mixed them with ambiguous astronomical numbers of the ancient history of the world."

From such materials as these Manetho, under the second Ptolemy, had to compose his history of Egypt.

Connex-
ions, Vol. I.
p. 27.

Of him Shuckford remarks, "It was his design to make the antiquities of Egypt reach as far back as possible, and therefore as many names as he found in their records, so many *successive* monarchs he determined them to have had; not considering that Egypt was at first divided into three and sometimes into four sovereignties, so that three or four of these might be reigning together. Above Menes he placed the heroes, then the gods, who reigned 36,525 years."

"Manetho's account does not seem to have given satisfaction; for soon after he had composed it, Eratosthenes was ordered to make a further collection of Egyptian kings."

Vol. I.
p. 164.

In fact, as Bunsen allows, Manetho's list

of kings has throughout more reigns than that of Eratosthenes, and there is great discrepancy in their order, and in the years of their government.

We may add to this, that Herodotus, who seems to have taken special pains in his Egyptian researches, and whose well-established integrity, and the absence of all appearance of *theorizing*, makes it certain that he has delivered down what he received from his authorities, has scarcely any agreement with these later writers.

From all which it has always appeared, and we fear it must still appear, that the Egyptians of the time of Ptolemy, or even of the time of Herodotus, knew far too little of the genuine history of the ancient dynasty, *i.e.* of a period according to Bunsen above 3000 years before their time, to form the basis of a genuine history of that vastly remote period. And on this account we need not be surprised that "the ancient empire had" (till Bunsen) "not been an object of connected chronological and historical enquiry."

The later Egyptians knew little about their ancient history.

Vol. II.
p. 2.

Unless therefore the new light which in these modern times, has been thrown upon the Egyptian antiquities, has revealed far more than was revealed to the Egyptians themselves before the Christian era, or a miraculous power, a new revelation has been

Bunsen's
courage for
a task, by
others held
to be hope-
less.

given to this modern Hierophant, it must be allowed that his courage has been greater than his discretion, in undertaking to establish, not the history merely, but the chronology of a period so remote, and above all, in preferring the result of his own *critical researches* to the statements of a genuine history, which has all the attributes in which, even by his own admission, the Egyptian monuments and accounts are deficient¹. We feel, in short, as little inclined to adopt this new hypothesis, as to accept the Hegelian revelation of his countrymen, which would leave us "without God in the world." It is so much the more

His labours
misdi-
rected.

to be lamented that Chevalier Bunsen's labours have taken this direction, because the labours both of Lepsius and himself are of

¹ We ought to say that Bunsen acknowledges that the Hebrew sacred books are *infinitely more historical* than the Egyptian, and professes his full belief in the truth of the *kernel and centre*—*kernes und mittelpunctes*—of the Sacred Volume; but as he takes the account of the Flood, for instance, and some important facts relating to the Exodus, to be part of the *shell*, we know not what would become of the kernel, if the Chevalier had continued his critical process. It would detain us from our subject to exhibit, as we might, the manner in which Bunsen has *treated* every kind of authority which was unfavourable to his theory. Herodotus is treated much more unkindly than of late years he has been accustomed to be. Theologians who were "*anxious*" about important events which he must annihilate, are ridiculed, and the most learned of the Fathers of the Church are harshly and almost abusively assailed.

the highest value whenever they refrain from extravagant speculation. The former has succeeded in bringing to light many of the ancient monuments of Egypt which were imperfectly known before: the latter has done much towards reducing to a system the Egyptian language. Yet as this work is put forth as the history of these discoveries, its tendency is to throw discredit on them by the spirit of wild speculation which it exhibits. It is very doubtful whether Lepsius, who from the spot supplied Bunsen with information, would agree with him in placing the *flourishing period of Egyptian civilization* so high.

Bunsen has ascribed to the *first dynasty* a monument which Lepsius ascribes to the *twelfth*, making a difference of about 2500 years. Moeris, whom Bunsen had placed at the head of the sixth dynasty, and to whom is ascribed the lake Moeris, by which Lower Egypt was made habitable, is believed by Lepsius to have had no existence, and the lake to have been the work of the twelfth dynasty¹.

Disagree-
ment be-
tween him
and Lep-
sius.

¹ The assumption of Bunsen would have to contend with geological difficulties in which he would be at issue with Cuvier, who maintains that if there be anything *demonstrated* in Geology, it is that the surface of our globe has been the victim of a great and sudden revolution of which the date cannot go much further back than five or six thousand years. But we have, according to Bunsen, a monarch who had already

*Discours
Prélimi-
naire.*

In short, a careful examination even of Bunsen's own account of Egyptian antiquities, must convince most people who are not inclined to sacrifice sober truth for romance, that the Mosaic account is not in the slightest degree disturbed by it.

Egypt became early disqualified for teaching mankind.

Instead of Egypt having thus taken the lead of the rest of mankind in civil and religious acquisitions, which qualified her to be the teacher of mankind, it will appear, by an examination into her real history, that the only distinction which can be claimed for Egypt, is that she had, more early than any other nation, become absolutely *disqualified* from imparting anything of real value to surrounding nations.

Her ancient empire, not many years before the visit of Abraham to that country, had by the righteous judgment of God been overthrown, and committed to a Semitic race at least not so corrupt. It is plain that the sacredness of the lower animals was part of the creed

done for Egypt 6000 years ago what has been done within a comparatively recent date for the great Level of the Fens in this country, by which, in the course of less than 500 years, an area of at least 600,000 acres, which was before in the condition of primitive Lower Egypt, has been converted into land of great general fertility. The cases of Egypt and of our own Fens are upon the whole so similar, that we may almost confidently conclude, from the present condition of the surface of Egypt, that a much shorter period must have intervened between its original draining and its existing state.

of the natives when the family of Jacob went to sojourn there. And the reigning monarch employed the sons of Israel in an occupation which on this account was an *abomination* to his native subjects.

Herodotus is considered to refer to the commencement of the Hyksos (*i. e.* the Semitic shepherd) rule in the conduct he ascribes to Cheops, though mistaken in the name of this king. "The priests told me," says he, "that up to the time of Rhampsinitus Egypt was well governed and flourishing, but that after him Cheops, who reigned over them, impelled them to all kinds of wickedness¹. For that he closed against them all their temples, and restrained them from their sacrifices."

Herod. ii.
124.

It appears that the Hyksos conciliated the native Egyptians by partly yielding to their superstitions; but that sometime before the Exodus, native princes had regained the throne of Egypt, and that the Israelites were odious to these on account of their having belonged to the party of the Shepherd-kings.

And to take that view of the subject which the Scripture gives us, the kingdom of Egypt,

Scripture
account of
the state of
Ancient
Egypt.

¹ Such appears to be the natural rendering of ἐς πᾶσαν κακότητα ἐλάσαι, though Baehr understands ἐαυτόν, and renders omni nequitia grassatum esse regem. The wickedness he forced them to commit was to give up their worship.

Vid. Bryant, on the Plagues of Egypt.

which was now returning with fresh eagerness to its ancient superstitions, became the theatre of such displays of divine power as were directly adapted to warn them, and to call them off from their abominations, inasmuch as each successive plague was directed against one or other of their superstitions. It was as true of the Egyptians as of the children of men in general, that "God doth not willingly afflict the children of men, but for our profit." "He endured them with much long-suffering."

But everything shewed that their tendency to debasement was incurable; they incontinently "returned to their wallowing in the mire;" and instead of being delivered, as they might, became only "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction;" and were thus made to exhibit a solemn warning to that people who were by these and other means capable of being reclaimed.

They contaminated the Hebrews;

How very far is all this account, and, as we shall see, every other genuine account of the condition of Egypt, from allowing of the assumption, that they imparted any the slightest portion of that instruction on Divine subjects of which the Hebrews are afterwards found in possession!

That the Israelites were in danger of *contamination* from them is more than probable.

Whether or not it was a vice inherent in the Jewish people, or acquired in Egypt, it is certain that until they had endured a long course of discipline, nothing could prevent their falling into the idolatry of surrounding nations. "Quicquid in Astartes aut Dagonis cultu ineptum, quicquid in Baalzebubi sacris absurdum, quicquid in Molochi sacrificiis crudele et inhumanum, quicquid in Priapi sive Miphletzet veneratione fœdum et turpe fuit, id se Sidoniis, Ammonitis, Moabitis, Palæstinis, Accaronitis debere Israel non abnuit."

Witsius,
Ægyptiaca, p. 70.

This, it may be remarked, is a sufficient proof that the refined and elevated truths on religious subjects which they acquired were no *spontaneous* product of the Jewish mind.

But that they derived *any one* of those doctrines, which are embodied in their sacred books, from any of these nations, and least of all from the Egyptians, is contrary to all the best evidence we have on this subject.

but taught
them no re-
ligious
truth.

Whatever was the "wisdom of Egypt," it certainly contained nothing whatever of this kind. They may have made some attainments at that time on physical subjects, and they were afterwards distinguished by a certain amount of science, which fame exaggerated so much the more as it was always connected with mystery. But it was probably when their credit on this account was the greatest,

and when philosophers were thus attracted to Egypt, that they were less than ever qualified to communicate a single idea of value on the subject of religion.

We have seen that their monuments and sacred books, after the most diligent investigation by men who were intent upon making the most of them for the purpose of exalting the character of the Egyptians, "contain nothing respecting the people's God:" the "living traditions" with which these may have been connected, can only be judged of from what is found in history respecting them. We have before us the result of the diligent researches of Herodotus, whose curiosity spared no pains, and whose fidelity in recording what he observed is beyond dispute.

Bunsen.

Their religious knowledge, as it appears from profane history.

But what is there in that account from which it appears that they possessed a single one of the doctrines in any approach to purity which are found in the Hebrew Scriptures?

On one subject indeed they are commonly supposed to have had the advantage even of the Jewish people, *viz.* in the doctrine of the *immortality of the soul*. Yet if the account of Herodotus and others be examined, and compared with the Hebrew Scriptures, it is wonderful how any persons, really acquainted with both, should have been able to see the matter in such a light. We will give the words of

Their real notion of the soul's continuance.

Herodotus: he says, *πρῶτοι δὲ καὶ τόνδε τὸν λόγον Αἰγύπτιοι εἰσι οἱ εἰπόντες, ὡς ἀνθρώπου ψυχῇ ἀθάνατος ἐστὶ· τοῦ σώματος δὲ καταφθίνοντος, ἐς ἄλλο ζῶον αἰεὶ γινόμενον ἐσδύεται· ἐπεὰν δὲ περιέλθῃ πάντα τὰ χερσαῖα καὶ τὰ θαλάσσια καὶ τὰ πετεινά, αὐτὶς ἀνθρώπου σῶμα γιγνόμενον ἐσδύνειν*. “The Egyptians are the first who say with regard to this doctrine (*i. e.* of the dead, of which he has been speaking), that the soul of man does not die; but when the body dies always enters by a fresh birth into another body, and after it has gone through all the terrestrial, marine, and winged animals, it again enters a human body.” This circuit is completed (he adds) in the space of 3000 years. The doctrine of the Egyptians here is plainly “not that of the *immortality of the soul*, but that of Metempsychosis,” with which it is very likely they were the first to corrupt the more ancient tradition, or universal belief that the soul survived the body. “*Et quis dubitet,*” says Baehr, “*hanc unice veram legitimamque verborum Herodoteorum interpretationem esse. Et vero, Hecataeo et Aristagora ac Manethone auctoribus, alio loco hoc ipse confirmat Diogenes Laertius, i. 11, τὴν δὲ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων φιλοσοφίαν τοιαύτην. . . . τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ ἐπιδιαμένειν καὶ μετεμβαίνειν.*”

Herod. ii.
123.

Metempsychosis probably their invention.

This doctrine, which agrees in general with the Indian philosophy, *may* have arisen from the source to which Faber ascribes it. He says, Pagan
Idolat.
p. 14.

“The doctrine of a mere succession of worlds that is, of the antediluvian and postdiluvian, was heightened to the doctrine of a succession of similar worlds; each mundane system was thought to present an exact resemblance of its predecessor. The same persons reappeared in new bodies, the same parts were acted by them afresh, the same deeds whether good or bad were repeated—the necessary consequence of this theory was the doctrine of the transmigration of souls.” It may be difficult to say what was the origin of this notion; but whatever it was, the doctrine itself bore scarcely any relation to that belief in a future life which was “brought to light” in the Christian revelation, and the practical influence of which is emphatically called the “power of the world to come.” And though it is probable the Greek philosophers had Egyptianized their notions on this subject, the opinions held by some of them were, at least as far as theory went, infinitely more worthy of thinking and spiritual beings than this delirious dream of the Nile.

Compared
with the
doctrine of
Revelation.

But it is above all things strange that the Scripture doctrine of a future life, and this passage of 3000 years through the nature of brutes, should ever have been confounded, or even thought worthy to be compared, not only by philosophists, but by Christian divines.

In order to this both doctrines must have been very imperfectly understood, and especially the real character of the Hebrew Theology.

We feel it therefore important here to enquire a little closely into the manner in which the people of God at different times *were taught to regard the future*. And while in doing this, we would devoutly wish to avoid the error of extravagant speculation, which is so much to be deplored in others, it will be fair to dwell a little in the spirit of Revelation itself on the method of Divine Providence in the *education* of His people.

It is fully in accordance with that spirit itself to regard the Israelites at the time of the Exode as in a state of religious and political *infancy*. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and from Egypt I called him my son. I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by the arms; but they knew not that I was healing them; and I drew them with cords of a man and with the bands of love." Now the course of divine instruction was exactly in accordance with this idea: the great principle which was instilled into them from their first deliverance, and which was the doctrine of all the wonders which were wrought in their sight, was that of implicit *obedience* to the divine will, *and absolute confidence in Him*, both for the present and the future. They

The *future* of the Hebrew scriptures.

Hosea xi. 1-4. Obs. 'From Egypt,' is a date.

Their future implicitly left in the hands of God.

were to feel themselves as it were in His *arms* who had baptized them into Moses, *i. e.* into the covenant of which he was the minister. Now under these circumstances important reasons may be perceived why a degree of *reserve* should have been at first maintained in the subjects of their spiritual instruction. Their minds were not prepared for everything which was in store for them, as is found in the case of children, because it is impossible for them at present to form any but erroneous notions respecting them.

Reasons
for some
reserve on
this subject
at first.

But of all subjects perhaps the doctrine of a future life was one which it would have been least expedient to dwell upon in the case of infant Israel.

Besides that in spiritual matters they were children, and their judgment immature, it is easy to see a good reason why at first scarcely any reference should be made to it, from *the vain and even foul speculations with which it had been associated in Egypt*. The very suggestion of it would have been an inlet to all that hideous imagery, that gross impurity in which a people had revelled *who had been given over to a reprobate mind*.

Instead therefore of giving them precise definitions of a future life, it pleased their Divine Instructor to require that they should not only confide in Him for their present

welfare, should receive fresh sustenance and guidance from day to day, but absolutely commit their *whole future being into His hands.*

Their first lesson was that of being made, so to speak, personally acquainted with a *personal God*. He was ever present with them, *manifesting* himself to them, in the only way in which, as far as we know, God can hold communion with man in our present state :

οὐ γάρ πω ἴδον ὦδε θεοὺς ἀναφανδὰ φιλεῖντας,
ὥς κείνοις ἀναφανδὰ παρίστατο.

Odyss. III.
221.

For in Egypt *there was no personal God*, and no personal interest to individual men in the phenomena of the universe, or in the expectations of the future.

And as this personal Being, who had thus taken a father's interest in them, was Himself declared to be the everliving God, and the very fountain of life, it was *all-sufficient* for His people to know that they were in His hands, and that that continued existence, the notion of which no unsophisticated human being has ever been found to be without, would be safe in His keeping.

And in truth, with all the apparent definiteness with which we in these latter days look upon a future life, the strongest and most genuine foundation of our hope, is a feeling of confidence which can *repose* in the perfect

wisdom and goodness of Him in whom we "live and move, and have our being."

Now we have all the evidence we could desire that in process of time the people of God had acquired exactly this feeling as to their future.

Other reasons why this subject is not dwelt upon in the Pentateuch.

But it must be observed, that the evidence of this was naturally less to be expected in the merely historical parts of the Sacred Writings, especially of an earlier period. Besides which, the Mosaic history, as far as it relates to the Israelites, relates to them as a *community*; it is the account of the divine dealings with them as a nation, and of their conduct under them as such.

Rewards and promises therefore, which under all circumstances of the people, were to be the hope of *individuals*, are less to be expected amongst those which are proposed to them as a nation. This distinction is very important in considering the nature of the *motives* which are held up to them as a state.

We must, therefore, look to a different department of their sacred literature for what was to bear on their private experience. Accordingly, the *religious* life of the people is copiously developed in those sublime compositions which constituted their liturgical poetry. It is there we find the spiritual condition of those who had most profited by

divine instruction and discipline. In this department the Hebrews were abundantly rich ; and it is sufficient testimony to the value of what they possessed in this way, that the Christian Church has, in all ages, made their sacred poetry the basis of all its highest devotion. And it is exactly that *indefinite* but yet *confiding* repose of mind, in reference to their whole future being, which is displayed in some of these inspired productions.

The views
to which,
however,
they really
attained.

The sixteenth Psalm will afford a specimen :

“The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup. v. 5.

Thou maintainest my lot.

The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places : v. 6.

Yea I have a goodly heritage.

I have set the Lord always before me. v. 8.

Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth. v. 9.

My flesh also shall rest in hope.

For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, v. 10.

Neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.

Thou wilt shew me the path of life. v. 11.

In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand pleasures for evermore.”

Christo-
logy, Vol.
1. pt. 1.
p. 159.

The short comment of Hengstenberg on this Psalm is the following: "The speaker begins with prayer to God for his protection, grounded on the faith that Jehovah is his God, and his highest good....He congratulates himself on his close relation to God, which affords him more delight than all earthly possessions, and expresses his thankfulness that God had made him a partaker of this grace. In confidence in this relation to God, he declares that he shall never faint: so far from that, with death itself before his eyes, he is cheerful and composed, convinced that the Lord will not allow him to be his prey for ever, but will lead him through death itself to a new life of joy and glory."

So Tholuck: "The Psalmist sees that for those who trust in God the way through the lower world leads to Heaven, where exists the perfection of life and joy, and an eternity of delightful being."

Cited by
Tholuck.

And even Ewald: "The calm yet glowing confidence, and cheerful hope of the poet, raises him far above all the future and its threatenings, and makes it clear to his mind, that in the continuance of life in God neither suffering nor death were to be dreaded; but that where the true life is, there even the body would come to its rest, and that it was in His power to deliver the soul from

the grave, whose will is no other than its life."

Now though this Psalm is declared by Scripture authority to relate to the Messiah, yet it was not the less on that account among the hymns which guided the devotion, both public and private, of multitudes of the people of God, and which exhibited the personal state of their mind.

And it exhibits exactly the state of mind which we are led to believe it was the great aim of the God of Israel to produce in His people, that is, an absolute repose of mind, both for the present and the future, on the power and goodness of the ever-living God. And we much doubt whether the greater definiteness of our hopes as Christians, though in itself of boundless value as a divine bestowment, has often sufficed to raise the minds of those who possess it much above this standard. We might exhibit other illustrations of the same state of mind. Thus in Psalm lxxiii., the same general confidence in God is extended to a future life:

"Nevertheless I am always with Thee;
For Thou hast holden me by my right
hand.
Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel,
And afterwards receive me to glory."

Compared with Psalm xlix. 16:

“But God will redeem my soul from the
power of the grave:
For He will receive me.”

Now, even though it should be doubted whether in these passages the doctrine of a future life be definitely expressed, we maintain that the doctrine which *is* expressed, and which is almost *the* doctrine of the Old Testament, is tantamount to it, and inclusive of it,—a doctrine which renders the soul serenely courageous in the presence of all the convulsions of earthly trouble: “We will not fear, though the earth be removed, and the mountains thereof carried into the midst of the sea:”—which enables it to dwell upon the prospect of a boundless future as the sphere in which the highest forms of divine benevolence are to be developed: “In Thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.”

Nothing can be more astonishing than that even Christian men, with this subject professedly before them, should ever think of comparing this Hebrew faith in the future with the Egyptian, so as to give the advantage even to the latter! The only true feeling with which they can be viewed together is, that of deep compassion for a people whose

faith was a most foul superstition, whose future was a dismal and degrading dream.

No other view than this can be taken of the Egyptian superstitions, except on the part of those who draw upon their own fancy for more spiritual ideas which this grotesque worship may be supposed to conceal. But we maintain, there does not exist a particle of evidence in the history of the Egyptians, that, at least within historic times and before Alexandrian theology became mingled with the Egyptian, this people ever rose above the gross conceptions which the forms of their worship immediately convey.

We have every reason to believe that the account which Herodotus has given of their theology has not done them injustice. He had no motive and no desire to conceal what was to their advantage. The subjects on which he has thought it his duty to observe a religious silence would, at least in his time, not have added to their credit by being divulged; and he seems to have had access to those who were well qualified to inform him, and well disposed to shew him the best side of things.

We have already seen what his account is of their doctrine of continued existence, from which it seems impossible to extract anything which constituted a *hope*, still less

anything which could enable one who believed it to triumph over death,—the utmost he could say to encourage him to meet the king of terrors was, that his stroke, though it would not destroy him, would make a beast of him.

But what had the Egyptians in their own genuine doctrine as believed in the time of Herodotus, and many ages before, in place of that Holy Father of spirits who vouchsafed to be the Friend, the Endeared Inheritance, of the Hebrews?

- ii. 65. Herodotus tells us, "*All the animals* belonging to the Egyptians are reckoned sacred; among these the cats and dogs are distinguished....When by certain accidents their cats are destroyed, great grief seizes them. In whatever house a cat dies a natural death, all the inmates shave their eyebrows; but when a dog dies, they shave their head and their whole body....And the cats when they die are carried in funeral procession to the sacred edifices, and buried in the city of Bubastis; the female dogs are buried in consecrated coffins, each in their own city."
- ii. 66.
- ii. 67.

Diod. Sic.
i. 83.

Diodorus Siculus also remarks on this subject: "With regard to the consecration of beasts by the Egyptians, it naturally appears strange to many, and is worthy of investigation. For they reverence some animals ex-

travagantly—καθ' ὑπερβολήν—not only when they are alive, but after they are dead. To each kind of animals thus worshipped, a plot of ground is devoted for its maintenance; and to some of these gods they make votive offerings for the recovery of their children; and the Egyptians are so far from declining the office of ministering to these animals, or deeming it a disgrace, that they make an ostentatious display of the dignity thus conferred upon them." He then describes the lamentations made at their death, and the care and solemnity with which they are buried, stating further that to kill one of them, a domestic cat for instance, even unwittingly, is instantly punished by a cruel death. Diodorus evidently gives the best account he can of this part of their philosophy; but not one of his speculations, whether derived from Egyptian priests or suggested by the Greek philosophy, appears to exhibit a single trace of what may be called spiritual, or worthy the name of religion—they are all of the earth, earthy.

Even if we should allow with Baehr, that ^{Herod. ii. 64.} the primitive Egyptians, in studying the powers of nature might assume the existence of mysterious qualities in the lower animals, "multaque eos hac in re vidisse quæ nos lateant," or that they worshipped those animals whose figures formed their zodiacal signs; we

have in either case the marks of a state of mind which was conscious of no Divine Being with whom they could hold communion, and which was *prostrate* to the lowest degree.

Their doctrine of *metempsychosis* may have been the origin of practices which became disgraceful in a still greater degree to human nature: at least, it is in this way that moderns have interpreted their grosser practices of worship, instead of deriving them from the traditions with which the Egyptians connect them. Their *hope* of continued existence, according to this theory, was that of being *born* into another nature instead of perishing—and this hope of being born was exhibited by a prominent display of the powers of *generation*, and these came to be symbolized by an exhibition of the organs of generation, or by special honour paid to those animals whose reproductive powers were greater, or whose organs for this purpose were most remarkable. Whether this was the original theory, or any other, it is not easy to say. But that dreadful abominations were exhibited in the face of day connected with their ceremonies, is certain. A god to whom they paid especial honour was represented by the exaggerated organs of a goat. Herodotus expressly says of the Egyptians of the Mendesian district: “Among the he-goats there is

one which is held in especial honour by them, and when he dies the whole district is put into deep sorrow . . . ἐγένετο δ' ἐν τῷ νομῷ τούτῳ ἐπ' ἐμεῦ τοῦτο τὸ τέρας· γυναικὶ τράγος ἐμίσγετο ἀναφανδόν. τοῦτο ἐς ἐπίδεξιν ἀνθρώπων ἀπίκετο."

This picture, dark and revolting as it is, is the true representation of Egyptian heathenism at the time when Greece began to reform its philosophy. And there is nothing to shew that in the earlier times of the Israelites Egypt afforded them much better lessons.

But as we have noticed, after the rise of Christianity, and when its conquests were such as to drive the advocates of heathenism to take desperate steps in its defence, because the religion of the Hellenes had been overthrown by philosophy itself; they looked to the mysterious rites of Egypt as to a field in which speculation might find all it wanted. The question will naturally arise, how this was possible; how, if Egyptianism was such as we have described it, even they were not deterred by its abominations.

How a better theology came to be referred to Egypt in later times.

It appears that from the time of Alexander and the Greek prevalence in Egypt, when Platonism had become predominant, and multitudes of Greeks and Jews made Alexandria the seat of a foreign theology, it became fashionable to a degree unknown before,

to ascribe not only the highest attainments on physical subjects to the Egyptians, but to make them the fountain of all philosophy.

Hermes
Trismegis-
thus.

i. 16.

An ancient sage whose Egyptian name was *Thoth*, but by philosophers for his marvellous knowledge called *Hermes Trismegistus*, was given out by Egyptian priests as the fountain of all things known and knowable. According to Diodorus Siculus, he gave a grammatic structure to language, invented letters, arranged the worship and service of the gods, discovered the order of the stars and the principles of harmony, invented the lyre, taught eloquence to the Greeks, and planted the olive.

Bib. Gk.
i. p. 46.

This man, according to Fabricius, was confounded by some with Adam, or was the patriarch Joseph, or was Moses himself. A little before the time of Diodorus books on all subjects in great numbers were ascribed to this Thoth by Egyptian priests of that time. Clemens Alexandrinus gives the names of 42 books of his on all human subjects, besides six more specially devoted to Anatomy, Medicine, and the like. But as the Alexandrian school extended its pretensions, his works came to be largely multiplied. Jamblicus ascribed to him 20,000 volumes, and states that Manetho made them 36,525¹.

De Myst.
Ægypt.
viii. 1.

¹ It is observable that this number 36,525 is a favourite

Galen, however, proved the books on medicine to be spurious; and from the nature of works still extant under this name, it may be seen how the pretensions of Egyptian priests, or of others who entered into their trade of falsification, continued to claim for Egypt all the knowledge conveyed thither.

To take as an example the Poemander, an account of which is given by Fabricius. This Poemander, from ποιμήν, accords exactly with the Christ of St. John x. 11—14. The book relates to the nature of things, and the creation of the world, which Hermes is made to have derived from Poemander. It contains partly the ancient Greek and partly the New Platonic philosophy, and these are mixed with quotations from the New Testament: it speaks of the λογὸς ὁμοῦσιος, παλιγγενέσια, and the like. Indeed, the extant works in general ascribed to Hermes, are so interspersed with Christian sentiments, that though they contain the worst forms of Egyptian idolatry, early Christians have been deceived by them.

Vol. i. p.
46.

The Poe-
mander.

It is manifest that the heathen of early with the Egyptians; it was the duration of their dynasty of gods, and is the number of days in a year multiplied by 100— $365\frac{1}{4}$ —a fraction which the Egyptians discovered. But this discovery was not made till after Solon's time; for he is declared to have invented the 360 days, which affords a strong suspicion that Manetho's dynasty of the gods was a recent invention.

Modern
heathen
writers
associate
their better
knowledge
with Egyp-
tian super-
stition.

Christian times followed to a great extent this prevailing practice. The falsification was repeated till it came to be believed; and they brought to the study of Egyptian philosophy those notions which they had plainly borrowed from a better source.

Plutarch,
Moralia,
ix. 433, &c.

This is very obviously the case with Plutarch, who flourished about 97 years after Christ; and his *Isis* and *Osiris* in this view is highly instructive.

His *Isis*
and *Osiris*.

Ch. xi.

Notwithstanding the testimony he is obliged to give of the text, so to speak, on which he comments, he so speculates on the Egyptian theology as to interpret its dark symbols conformably to exalted notions which he had acquired elsewhere. Plutarch, in fact, sees in it a highly spiritual system. The *Isis* and *Osiris* is addressed to Clea, a priestess in Delphi consecrated to *Osiris*. He exhorts her not to give heed to the numerous fables which are told respecting the Egyptian deities, but to hear and receive what is said about them from those who piously and philosophically interpret them—that a class of persons dedicated to *Isis*, and called *Isiaci*, were distinguished by their costume; but, says he, it is not the beard nor the pallium which makes a philosopher, nor is it the linen vestment and the tonsure which makes an *Isiacus*, but he is an *Isiacus* who uses his reason

Ch. ii.

respecting what is said of the gods, and submits it to philosophic scrutiny.

Plutarch therefore comes to this theology resolved to see in it all which, according to his notions, *ought to be found* in the doctrine of the gods. His account of the legends.

He then gives the legends as they are told; tells a story of a conspiracy made by Typhon to destroy Osiris; how Osiris was inveigled into a coffin, which was closed upon him, cemented down, and thrown into the Nile; how Isis sought for it everywhere, and found it in a cluster of the lotus-plant; but the body being again seized by Typhon, was cut into pieces and scattered; that all the parts were diligently collected, but the *membrum* could not be found—hence this became an object of special importance in their worship; that the *common interpretation* of this legend made it a figurative representation of ancient heroes, who by their virtue attained to divine nature, but afterwards fell into misfortune. In proof of this, he says, “according to tradition, the form and complexion of Osiris and Python are stated.” Ch. XII—XX. Egyptian interpretations of them all physical.

Plutarch prefers the opinion of those who think these things refer neither to gods nor men, but to *μέγαρα δαιμόνια*, both good and bad, and that the obscene observances among these rites were intended to please the latter. xxv. His own view of such interpretations.

Osiris and Isis were good *Genii*; Typhon a bad one.

- xxxii. An opinion which he thinks more *philosophical* is, that Osiris is the Nile impregnating the Earth, which is represented by Isis; that Typhon is the sea into which the Nile flows and is lost; that the more *intelligent of the priests* say that Osiris is the *principle of moisture*, and the seminal essence which is the cause of birth; while Typhon is the principle of sterility. This accounts for all those objects being sacred to them which have a resemblance to the *γεννητικόν μορίον*.
- xxxiii. Other interpretations are given as from Egyptians, most of them connected with the subject of generation, and all of them with mere physical phænomena. Typhon is the solar mortal, Osiris the lunar; the one unfavourable, the other favourable, to reproduction.
- xxxvi. Various reasons are given for the worship of animals, but all of a physical kind. The cat, because a type of the moon, the pupil of her eye waxes and wanes, she produces first one kitten, then two, and so on till she has thirteen at a litter, which equals the lunar months of the year.

- lxi. He gives an account of a very important solemnity in which all Egypt is in mourning as at a funeral. The Egyptians say it is

because then Isis is buried, who comes to life again when the seed germinates.

Plutarch's own opinion is at least a ^{LXVI.} poetical one. He says, the season of these rites suggests the suspicion that they were instituted on account of their fruits being buried out of sight. At a time of scarcity they buried these fruits with an uncertain hope, and with regret for the loss of them, and thus with funeral rites.

But, says he, "originally they merely honoured them as being the gifts of the gods, but in process of time they came to regard these vegetables *as the gods themselves*, who were thus buried and rose again; and they thus become involved in all kinds of absurdity and impiety, so that," says he, "Xenophanes of Colophon exhorted the Egyptians, either not to mourn for them if they thought them deities, or to cease to believe them such."

"The mischief," says he, "arising from confounding such things with the gods, has happened in no small degree to the Egyptians, by the reverence they pay to *animals*. For while the Greeks speak of various creatures as sacred to different deities, the Egyptians for the most part worship the beasts themselves; and have thus not only exposed their sacred things to ridicule, but, which is a much more serious evil, have given rise to

unmingled superstition in some, and atheism and ferocity in others."

We thus find, that with all Plutarch's desire to philosophize on the Egyptian religion, he has failed to exhibit in it any approach to what is *spiritual*. It is either bare superstition, or at best a jumble of myths, the shadows of some physical notions.

If he introduces an idea which rises above this level, he is obliged to confess it is his own, or to *refer it to some other source than Egyptian*.

XLV.

Thus he says, A very ancient opinion has come down from divines and legislators,—*κάτεισιν ἐκ θεολογίων καὶ νομοθετῶν*,—to poets and philosophers, ascribed to no original, but the faith of which is firm and indelible, "that the universe is guided not by chance, devoid of mind and reason and rule, and yet there is no single reason which sustains the whole, and sits as it were at the helm, but that two contrary principles are acting in opposite directions, at least as far as this sublunary world is concerned."

LXXVIII.

In conclusion, he employs the same refinement on the Egyptian doctrine of the dead. As to that subject, says he, which the priests attend to with so many expressions of dread, and wrapped in a garb of mystery, declaring that Osiris is the ruler of the dead, which they

mention with reserve, and so as to produce a thrill of horror in the multitude, who are led to believe that his sanctuary is under the earth among the departed; *they do not know* that he himself dwells far distant from the earth, unpolluted, undefiled, and free from the taint of decay and death. While the souls who are by dissolution freed from mortal bodies and passions, have him for their sovereign ruler, and contemplate him without satiety, fixing their desire—*ποθοῦσαι*—on the beauty which is ineffable*. By which love Isis, as the myth informs us, was filled, and the object of which she sought and enjoyed.

It is obvious that Plutarch found *nothing in the genuine Egyptian theology* which arose above the physical world, or which had not sunk below the human in what might be classed as spiritual. And yet he associates it with sentiments derived neither from Egyptian nor from Grecian philosophy, but conveyed almost in the language of Hebrew and Christian revelation.

Porphyry, who lived more than a century later, when Heathenism had still more entrenched itself within the darkness of Egypt—

Porphyry
adopts the
same course
as Plutarch.

¹ "He that is of a pure heart shall see the King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off." *Isaiah*.—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." *Sermon on the Mount*.

198, c.

tian myths, speaks in strong terms about the superstition of the Egyptians, though in general he also follows the prevailing fashion. Thus, in Euseb. *Præp. Evang.*, after expressing strong displeasure at the indignities ascribed to the gods, and observing that the (Egyptian) hierogrammateus Chæræmon relates these things as commonly believed,—*θρυλούμενα*—by the Egyptians, he says, “But what sense can there be in such worship as theirs, which represents the sun as rising from a marsh, or setting on a lotus, or steering a ship, and the like? Yet this, according to them, appears in the true vision of him—*αὐτοπτεῖσθαι*—whereas they are ascribing to him the workings of their own fancy. But if they say, this is all symbolical, why do they not explain the symbols, instead of using senseless jargon? But, in truth, either all these things are the devices of impostors—*γοήτων τεχνάσματα*—or we are utterly mistaken in our notions of the Deity.”

Eus. *Præp.*
Ev. 94, a.Juv. Sat.
xv.

Yet Porphyry can philosophize thus about the monstrous idolatry of Egypt:

“Qualia demens
Egyptus potentia celat.”

“That the Egyptians from meditation and intimate acquaintance with the Divine nature, perceive that the Deity pervades not human nature merely, but all living beings, and

therefore in giving forms to the gods, they adopt every living thing, and sometimes a combination of men and beasts."

Again, he says, "With surpassing wisdom, and by their intimacy with the Divine, they understand that some of the gods are more attached to some lower animals than to men."

Nothing, in short, can be more obvious than that all which was really Egyptian was like their monuments, and their extant remains of every kind, absolutely destitute of the "idea of the people's God," and, at any rate, at the time of the reform of Greek philosophy, could not possibly have suggested a single hint to the enquiring Greeks of those sublimer truths which came into their possession; still less could it have afforded a single thought of value to the unspeculating Hebrews. But when Plutarch or Porphyry, with minds already furnished with better notions, employ them in speculating, it really makes no difference from what object they set out in doing so. The Egyptian myths were as good for this purpose as the assumptions of the modern philosophy; and the sublime truths of Revelation have as logical a connexion with the abominations of Egypt, as they have with the nebulous theory of Hegel.

It is plain, however, that Egyptianism,

But Plutarch's and Porphyry's own account exhibit the barrenness of Egypt on these subjects.

Yet modern
and im-
proved phi-
losophy be-
came false-
ly con-
founded
with an-
cient Ægyp-
tianism.

the new Platonic philosophy, the Alexan-
drian falsifications about Hermes, and the
speculations of expiring and desperate Hea-
thenism, have been viewed together. And
with a waywardness that is unaccountable,
philosophers have never ceased to avert their
eyes from the honest and radiant countenance
of truth, and seek for its revelations in this
heterogeneous mass of heathenism.

We would fain now make our exodus
from Egypt, having been

“long detained

In that obscure sojourn”—

but there is one distinguished feature of the
Hebrew theology which has been, and still
is so confidently referred to Egypt, that it
deserves special enquiry; the more so as this
will enable us to exhibit another brilliant
contrast between a doctrine of Revelation
and the alleged Egyptian source of it. Be-
sides which, it will enable us, though some-
what in anticipation, to exhibit the Scripture
source of one of the sublimest ideas in the
Platonic theology. This is the ancient *Urim*
and *Thummim* of the *Hebrews*.

Urim and
Thummim
ascribed to
Egypt.
1. 65. 5.

Diodorus Siculus mentions that “the Egyp-
tian *δικαστής* wore about his neck, suspended
by a chain of gold, a signet, *ζώδιον*, of precious
stones, which they called *truth*, and the pro-
ceedings commenced when the presiding

judge produced this image of truth. He refers to this also, Bk. 1. ch. 48, where he speaks of a sculpture representing a court of justice. On one wall, says he, there are thirty wooden figures, in the midst of which is the chief judge with the image of truth suspended from his neck with her eyes closed, and many books beside him: καὶ κατὰ τὸ μέσον τὸν ἀρχιδικαστήν, ἔχοντα τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐξηρτημένην ἐκ τοῦ τραχήλου καὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπιμύουσαν. This representation, he adds, is intended to shew that the judges are to receive nothing, and that the presiding judge is to look to truth alone.

To these two passages Gesenius has referred under the word אֱמֶת, as justifying the conclusion that the Urim and Thummim were borrowed from the Egyptians. But an emblem of truth or justice has in all nations been connected with the figure of a judge, and, as we shall see, bears scarcely the shadow of a semblance to those sacred symbols which were borne by the Jewish High Priest. Grotius, however, seems to think there was an imitation, but he charges it on the later Egyptians: "Imitati hoc sunt," (speaking of the breastplate of the High Priest) "*sed ut pueri virorum res imitantur, Ægyptii.*"

By Gesenius.

De Veritate, i. 16.
Nat.
Opinion of Grotius.

But when this Divine institution is considered in the light in which Scripture places

Examination of the Hebrew institution.

it, we think all notion of resemblance should vanish. The name of the breastplate itself may have suggested the idea of comparing them.

But the word judgment, משפט, there, is a most general term for righteousness of every kind, and by no means confined to judicial rectitude. The breastplate was not a thing to be worn in a court of judicature, but Aaron was to bear the names of the children of Israel on the breastplate when he went into the holy place, *for a memorial before the Lord continually.*

Ex. xxiii.
30.

As a whole, no doubt, the breastplate was used when the Divine Oracle was consulted, and thus in *difficult cases* of judgment, when, so to speak, an oracular *precedent* was wanted to rule all future decisions. But it seems impossible not to see that the breastplate of the High Priest was as much above a mere badge of a judge, as the worship of Jehovah was above the proceedings of an Egyptian court. And the ideas conveyed by *Urim and Thummim* especially are related, as we hope to shew, to the sublimest doctrines of revealed religion.

Later Jewish notions of Urim and Thummim.

In accordance with the gross conceptions of later Judaism, which may well have been articles of exchange one way or other between them and the Egyptians, and from

which Spencer has drawn so much to favour ^{De Leg. Heb.} his disgraceful notions of sacred things; the Urim and Thummim have been *assumed* to be various objects, more or less ridiculous, external to the precious stones of the breastplate. But no such thing can be gathered ^{Scripture account.} from the Scripture language on this subject. The breastplate was to *be made*, the precious stones were to *be set in it*, the chains of gold were to be attached to it; but of the Urim and Thummim it is said, “*Thou shalt give to the breastplate* אֶל־הַשֵּׁן וְיָתֵתָּ, the Urim, and they shall be upon Aaron’s heart when he goeth in before the Lord;” terms which are commonly so used elsewhere as to allow of the supposition that these two mysterious names were *no visible part of it at all*, but attributes assigned to it emblematical of high moral qualities. Whatever they were, they were so important as to *designate* the whole oracular apparatus. “He (Joshua) shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for ^{Num. xxvii. 21.} him after the judgment of *Urim* before the Lord.” “Let thy Urim and Thummim be with the *Holy One* whom thou didst prove ^{Deut. xxxiii. 8.} at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah.” See also 1 Sam. xxviii. 8, and Nehemiah vii. 65. We observe that Lightfoot and others have so taken the Urim and Thummim.

Now, in some way or other, *lights and perfections* were to be emblematically carried into the holy place *as a memorial before the Lord*.

The important doctrine of which they were emblematical.

And it is remarkable that in every part of the sacred Scriptures, a double attribute like what these two emblems are found to indicate in Scripture, is ascribed to the *Supreme Being*, as that which constituted, so to speak, the foundation of his moral nature; and the idea of it runs through the whole theology of Revelation.

And our reason for endeavouring to set this subject in a clear light is, that the most ancient traditions among the heathen, and especially the later Platonic philosophy, contain distinct traces of the same attributes ascribed to the *Divine Being*. If we first consider the terms separately, it will be found that both of them were commonly applied to the Divine nature, as conveying the highest conception of Him, but always in a sense purely spiritual, without a trace of those physical notions into which the Persians and Egyptians had corrupted especially the former, *viz.* light.

Light an emblem

The idea of *light* was connected with all that could convey comfort, and joy, and blessing, to mankind, in the character of God. Thus :—

“The Lord is my light and my salvation; Ps. xxvii. 1.
The Lord is the strength of my life.”

“With thee is the fountain of life : Ps. xxxvi.
In thy light shall we see light. 9, 10.

O continue thy loving-kindness to them
that know thee,
And thy righteousness to the upright in
heart.”

“Send forth (emit) thy light and truth : Ps. xliii. 3.
Let them lead me ; let them bring me to
thy holy hill.”

“The Lord shall be to thee an everlasting Isai. lx. 19.
light.”

“Thy judgments are as the light that Hosea vi. 5.
goeth forth :

For thou saidst, I desired mercy.”

And so in the old Testament *passim*.

That this mode of considering the Divine nature is not a mere poetic figure, but a kind of *doctrine* of Revelation, appears from parts of Scripture not poetical. In the remarkable passage Exod. xxxiii. 19, Moses requested of the divine goodness, to see the glory of God, his *brightness*, and Jehovah said, “I will make all my goodness pass before thee.” This is a distinct declaration, in accordance with the above passages, that the Divine *glory* is identical with his *goodness*.

It is worthy of remark on this passage, that in the Gospel of St. John, our Saviour xiv. 21.

has used the words by which the LXX. have rendered the request of Moses, ἐμφάνισόν μοι σεαυτόν, Our Saviour says, "He who loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him—ἐμφάνισω αὐτῷ ἐμαυτόν—I will *shew him my glory.*"

From all which it seems clear that the idea of light, effulgence, is emblematical of the various forms of the Divine *benevolence*. St. John appears also to have alluded to this passage in his first Epistle. Jehovah had said to Moses, "Thou canst not *see my face*; I will make *all my goodness pass before thee.*" St. John says, "No man hath *seen God* at any time. If we love one another, God *delleth in us.*" For, he says, "He who loveth not, knoweth not God; *for God is love*;" "and he who dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

1 Ep. iv.
12.

ver. 8.

ver. 16.

But the Apostle John speaks almost in the same terms respecting *light*, as he does respecting love. He says, "This is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you, that God *is light*, and in Him there is no darkness." And, "He who loveth his brother dwelleth in light, but he who hateth his brother is in darkness."

1 Ep. i. 5.

Light =
love in St
John.
ii. 9.

Ch. i. 17.

So St. James: "Every *good* gift and every *perfect gift* cometh down from the

Father of lights, with whom is no variableness."

He had undoubtedly in his thoughts the double attributes implied by the Urim and Thummim of the ancient oracle.

The glory of the Lord was signified by various *bright* appearances presented at different times, and by one which appears to have been constantly present with the early Church of Israel, and on this account called the *shekinah*, as making its *abode* with them. But in speaking of the *Incarnation of the Son of God*, St. John plainly intimates that His presence on earth was this *shekinah*, this tabernacling of his Glory—"the Word was made flesh, and tabernacled with us—ἐσκήνωσεν—and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of *grace and truth*."

The idea
the same as
that of the
shekinah.

We might exhibit the same idea in other of the New Testament writers, as in Heb. i. 3, where the Son of God is said to be the ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης... αὐτοῦ, and in that remarkable passage (Ephes. v.): "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord... For the fruit of the Spirit is in all *goodness*, and *righteousness*, and *truth*... Wherefore he saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light¹."

¹ On which Harless, Eph. i. 473, remarks, the allusion is

With regard to the second part of this double attribute, **תָּמִיד**—Perfections—it sufficiently expresses its own meaning, namely, that of *integrity*. The LXX. render it by *ἀληθεία*. In the singular it is applied to whatever is pure and spotless, whether externally, as in the case of victims, or morally, as to character. It is often applied to the conduct of the Almighty: “As to God, His way is perfect:” which is beautifully expressed by St. James in the passage cited, “Every *good* gift and every *perfect* gift cometh down from the Father of *lights*, in whom *οὐκ ἔστι παραλλαγή*, there is no variableness.” The benevolence of God is bound up as it were with spotless integrity, with unswerving rectitude.

2 Sam. xxii.
31.
Ep. i. 17.

Both ideas
commonly
united in
speaking of
God's moral
nature.

Now with this proof before us, that the goodness of God, expressed as it is by the comprehensive term **רַחֲמִים**, tender mercy, was constantly indicated by the idea of light, and that this was seldom viewed apart from that integrity with which human kindness is not always found united;—we shall see in both the Old and New Testament perpetual references to this most ancient doctrine conveyed by the Urim and Thummim, where both are as it were blended. Thus while we have in Ps. lvii. 4, “God shall send forth His *mercy* to Isaiah lx. 1, “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the *glory of the Lord* is risen upon thee.”

and truth," it is "send forth thy *light* and truth" in Ps. xliii. 3.

In Ps. lxxxv. 9, 10, it is connected with the reference to the *shekinah*.

"For His salvation is nigh them that fear him ;

That *glory* may *dwell* in our land.

Mercy and truth are met together¹;

Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other."

Jehovah proclaimed himself to be abundant in *goodness* and *truth*. And, not to multiply citations from the Old Testament, where this mention together of goodness or mercy, and truth, are perpetually occurring, we will refer to an interesting example in the New Testament, among others that might be given. The full-growth—*τελειότης*—of Christian character is repeatedly spoken of as the likeness of Christ in his *truthful benevolence*. Accordingly, St. Paul exhorts the Ephesians, ἀληθεύ- Ex. xxxiv. compared with Ps. lxxxvi. 15. iv. 15. *οντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ αὐξήσωμεν εἰς αὐτόν*. "By the union of truth with love let us grow up unto Him;" and this ἀληθεύειν is opposed to the *variable-* in v. 14. *ness* which belongs to an *unestablished* character. When therefore the Jewish high

¹ There is an obvious allusion to the Urim and Thummin of the breastplate in Prov. iii. 3:

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee;

Bind them about thy neck;

Write them upon the table of thine heart.

priest went into the Holy place he bore with him, on his heart, a mysterious emblem, to which the idea of this double attribute was attached, as *a memorial before the Lord*; and we can scarcely avoid the conviction, that in this way the *Great Mediation* was prefigured, which has been so fully developed in the Christian dispensation.

We have therefore a doctrine of great sublimity and of intense interest to a guilty and sorrow-stricken world, illuminating from the earliest to the latest times the page of Revelation, written on that of the New Covenant with the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and connected most clearly with this emblematical badge of the Jewish High Priest. And a feeling is apt to rise, which it requires some philosophy to repress, when we see such writers as Dr. Spencer, and those who followed in his steps, comparing this and similar institutions of Divine sublimity, with the grovelling rites of Egyptian heathenism. It would have been impossible for them to do this without a too obvious absurdity, if they had not confounded the doctrines of Divine Revelation with the *drivelling* Judaism of a period in which the Jews had ceased to "see with their eyes, and hear with their ears," all that was spiritual in their system. We have dwelt somewhat at length on this subject, because, for want

of recognizing what the Hebrew Scriptures really contained, and its identity with the New Testament revelation in some doctrines of this kind, it has in some quarters been a common opinion that the ideas in the latter were borrowed from new-Platonism, and in the former from Egypt¹. Whereas the closer we are able to look into what the Egyptian idolatry really was, aided as we have lately been by all possible light thrown upon its antiquities, and the more carefully we look into the traditions which have come down to us, the more it appears certain, that from the time in which our ancient Scriptures were written, to that in which some of its better doctrines begin to shew themselves in heathen philosophical writings, *Egypt possessed nothing* which would possibly have suggested the lowest of the doctrines and observances of Scripture, or which could *have furnished to the Greeks* and others the germ of those speculations which attained so nearly to the truths of Revelation. While on the other

¹ Dr. Umbreit, in his review of Baehr's *Symbolik des Mosaischen Cultus*, p. 151, 1843, remarks, that since the time of Marsham and Spencer it has been *the prevailing opinion* on the continent that Moses had borrowed most of his ordinances of worship from the Egyptians. Dr. Umbreit has taken nearly the same view of the Urim and Thummim as we have exhibited, and has expressed his conviction that in that most significant badge, the breastplate of the high priest, we have the most distinguished symbol of the *Great Mediator*. Studien und Kritiken.

hand, it is more than probable, from the accounts we have in Manetho, Diodorus, Plutarch, and others, that the later Egyptians had begun extensively to imitate whatever in surrounding nations had been received with *éclat*, and yet to claim it as their own.

CHAPTER V.

AN ANCIENT REVELATION TRADITIONAL.

ALTHOUGH there is contained in Revelation a complete and authentic statement of all necessary truth on divine subjects, it cannot be doubted that some portions of that truth, in various degrees of departure from its first purity, had been from the beginning in possession of all mankind.

An ancient
revelation
handed
down by
tradition.

It may fairly be considered as *settled* on scientific ground, that the human race had a common origin. And the evidence by which this is established shews also that the early condition of mankind was not a condition of *barbarism*. It must, however, have been a state of *simplicity*, a state in which men did not speculate—a youthful world receiving with implicit credence and reverence the instruction imparted by its common parent. Every child reared in the bosom of a well-ordered family, may be to a degree a type of the first inhabitants of the earth. Such a child is anything but a savage, but he receives nothing at first because he perceives the *reason* of it. He regards his parent as a faithful, benevolent, and infallible guide. He has that sort of *com-*

munion with his parent which the first of mankind must have had with Heaven, ἦν δέ τις ἔμφυτος ἀρχαία πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἀνθρώποις κοινωνία, says Clement. This communion was ἔμφυτος, and it was not, he adds, till erroneous and pernicious sentiments had seduced from their celestial life the heaven-born race of men, and laid him prostrate on the earth, ἐξετάλυσεν, that he began to give all his attention to earthly things.

Ad Gentes,
p. 21.

And inher-
ent princi-
ple existed.

Rom. ii. 18.

Cited by
Grot. on
Rom. ii. 18.

This ἔμφυτος κοινωνία implies, perhaps, a certain foundation of moral principle inherent in the heart of man, together with a capacity for receiving instruction on moral subjects which man alone possesses. This St. Paul has expressed by τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν. But as we know that, in scripture language, the heart is not only the *conscience*, but the *memory*, this *inscription of the law on the heart* was partly, perhaps principally, that divine instruction which was originally, and continued to be traditionally, inscribed on the memory and conscience of mankind. So it appears to have been understood by Tertullian: he says, "Ante legem Moysi scriptam in tabulis lapideis, legem, contendo fuisse non scriptam quæ naturaliter intelligebatur *et a patribus custodiebatur.*"

And after the destruction of the ancient race of men, in whose heart this inscription

had faded or become effaced, who had become incurably corrupt in the imaginations of the thoughts of their heart, *i. e.* in whom the ancient Revelation which tradition should have preserved, had been spoiled by vain and wicked speculations, it was provided that the second progenitor of the world should be qualified in a high degree for being the Patriarch of the human race, by distinguished virtue and by intimate communion with God. With him a covenant was established, and certain ritual observances, associated with a striking phænomenon of nature: "This is the token of the covenant I will make between me and you, *for perpetual generations*: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."

Noah obtained a fresh revelation.

Gen. ix. 12.

All this was a special provision for handing down to human posterity that traditional knowledge of God which was a fresh and enlarged endowment to the human race. Noah, who was a "preacher of righteousness" to the old world, had necessarily reared his own family in the knowledge which he gave to others; and it is impossible that the awful catastrophe they had witnessed, and from which they had been delivered so wonderfully, should not deeply impress them with the importance of their religious faith.

Contained
the true
cosmo-
gony.

It is impossible to say what was the amount of that tradition; but it doubtless contained some account of the great facts of the creation of the world.

Heb. xi. 2.

“*By faith*,” says the Apostle, “we understand that the worlds *were framed by the word of God*; so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear,”—*εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων γεγενέσθαι*—were not the spontaneous birth of nature.

This was the first point in their theology; and the institution of the *Sabbath* appears to have been intended as a perpetual memorial of this truth. The importance of which truth appears from the fact, that wherever it was not held fast, men seemed to have lost the anchor of all that was rational on Divine subjects.

Tradition
of the
Deluge.

The story of the Deluge as a Divine infliction upon a guilty world, was another of the great facts of sacred history. As Noah was a preacher of righteousness, some of the

Principles
of divine
ethics.

great points of Divine ethics must have been delivered down; and as there is essentially bound up with these throughout revelation a

Of human
demerit.

statement of the *demerit* of mankind, so there is always connected with them a reference to

Accept-
ance with
God.

some other means of acceptance with God than human merits; and this was symbolically expressed by those sacrifices which we

are told of among the first important transactions of the Patriarch.

The inhabitants of the new world were doubtless possessed of traditions of this kind for a time, and adhered to them with religious care. But speculation was to be the besetting sin of the new world, as it had been that of the old; Jehovah said of *them*, "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

Corrupted
by specu-
lation.

The hypothesis of Faber is so far probable, that this corruption had begun before the dispersion. He says, "While the world was yet in its infancy, and before the rapidly progressive increase of mankind rendered their separation either necessary or desirable, the rudiments of all future nations would be assembled together in one region, and would jointly form one moderately large community. Such a community during the lives of the first patriarchs would be greatly influenced by them both in religion and polity: but when they were removed from this earthly scene, and when no one by mere succession could hope to obtain an equal degree of authority over the daily increasing multitude, a moderate knowledge of human nature will teach us that ambition would soon begin to agitate the breast of some aspiring individual whose conscious talents raised him above the level of his political equals."

Origin of
Pagan Ido-
latry, p. 67,
Vol. I.

The fact however that a large community had assembled in one fruitful locality, and had made such progress in the arts of civilized life, as to apply them to the purposes of luxury and aggrandizement, in building "a city and a tower," is quite sufficient to make it more than probable, that their thoughts had become excessively occupied with physical subjects, and that moral and religious ideas had begun to stagnate into corruption.

In the whole history of the world it has been found (of nations no less than of individuals) as Dr. Johnson somewhere says, that "Under the sunshine of prosperity human nature is much more disposed to luxuriate into folly than to ripen into fruit." Large and populous cities have invariably been dangerous to the moral condition of mankind.

The dispersion,

Hence their dispersion by Divine interference, was in itself adapted to stay the plague, and to prolong the more virtuous condition of the human race.

The settled nations first depraved their traditions,

In this dispersion it is likely that some of the tribes were much longer than others before they attained a settled condition. And it is far from certain that these were the first to lose sight of those traditions which had been their common inheritance. They would not be in a state of barbarism, but they were in that state of *simplicity*, which tena-

ciously adheres to tradition because it has not become mingled with philosophical inventions.

But we find several of the great divisions of the scattered race of man, in very early times, settled down into flourishing states; on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris, on the confines of India, and on the banks of the Nile in Lower Egypt.

Babyloni-
ans, Indi-
ans, Egyp-
tians.

Though corruption may have begun on the plains of Shinar, and the seeds of it been carried to these localities; it was in the settled security and luxury of these nations, allowing, on the part of multitudes, of a speculative life, that ancient truths began to be diluted by their own imaginings, which were more apt to be detained in the outward world than to rise to the spiritual, until "the heaven-born race of man became a being prostrate on the earth."

Of the early condition of these ancient nations we have in fact no *history* supplied by themselves. Where they had a literature and that literature has partly come down to us, we have every proof that their progress in each case was a downward one.

The early Indian traditions are nearer the truth as it was originally possessed by them, in proportion to their antiquity. The progress was more and more to what was physical,

and from that to what was morally debasing, until we come to a period in which their system had manifestly received into it foreign elements, entirely different in character from what was of genuine Indian growth.

The Egyptians appear to have had no early literature. If, as Bunsen and others have said, their hieroglyphic writing was the first germ of the knowledge of letters, they seem to have been ages behind their neighbours in developing it. And the cumbrous system to which they adhered was all unfit to express the ideas of any other people than of the Egyptians. Their monuments, as we have seen, whatever they may have once *concealed*, have long refused to speak of anything truly good. And their traditions, when separated, as they may easily be, from later foreign elements, exhibit a people given over to a reprobate mind.

Semitic
family less
corrupt in
its tradi-
tions.

The great division of mankind, which lay between Egypt and the East, and which used the so called Semitic language, though in some cases corrupt enough *in practice*, and *also* inclined to fix their thoughts on the physical world, seem never to have gone so far in corrupting their ancient tradition, as was the case with the Indians and Egyptians.

Their tastes and mental habits were far less inclined to metaphysical subtleties of

thought, and their reverence greater for the doctrines and habits of their forefathers.

Now as it was in this family of language that the only genuine ancient history of mankind was written, and the successive revelations of the Divine will conveyed; their religious notions, as might have been expected, departed less widely from those of their early ancestors¹.

But in one disguise or other, some of the main principles of truth, as originally revealed, continued to adhere to the religious systems of *all nations* whose opinions we have the means of knowing.

In India the creation and destruction of the world, and its creation again, is a process which is continually repeated, the same persons appear again on the stage of being, and the same events occur to them. And on this, according to Faber, they have founded the doctrine of transmigration.

It is to be traced, though less distinctly, in the Egyptian legends. The authority how-

¹ It is interesting to find from the ancient wedge-shaped inscriptions relating to Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes, which have been lately partly deciphered by Lassen, and our countryman Major Rawlinson, that they are marked by dignified simplicity, referring to the care and favour of a beneficent Providence by which the crown of Persia first fell into their hands. 'The great God Ormuzd, He created the earth, He made the heavens, He created mortals,' is their language.

The doctrine of Creation.

ever on which Faber relies for their belief on this subject, is mainly that of the books of Hermes, which is, as we have seen, utterly unsafe for this purpose. It exists if at all, in a sublimated form in the legends respecting the circles of the gods which Herodotus and Manetho have given.

Ancient
Hellenic
and Roman
tradition.

The Cosmogony of the Greeks and Romans presents this doctrine in a form more approaching to the Mosaic statements. It has been the opinion of writers who are entitled to great reverence, from the ancient apologists to great men of more modern times, that the doctrine of the *Holy Trinity* is also among the traditions of ancient nations.

Holy Trin-
ity.

That this mysterious doctrine which is expressly revealed in the New Testament, *is also to be gathered* from the Hebrew Scriptures, is admitted by all who receive these Divine records with the reverence which is due to them; but the more the *triads* of the ancients are examined in connexion with the mythological history of the persons who are made to compose them, the less certain or likely does it appear, that they have any relation to the doctrine of the *Triune God*.

Sacrifice.

The universality of sacrifice is another tradition which, with many corruptions, has been handed down from the time of Noah.

Immor-
tality of the
soul.

As to the belief in the continued existence

of the soul, it is probably one of those elementary feelings which are *inherent* in the human mind, and no unsophisticated people is found to be without it.

The same remark might have been made respecting the belief of some Power superior to ourselves, with which in a state of nature all minds appear to be impressed. Whether it was a traditional truth or a kind of moral instinct, it is fixed in the minds of all men who have not, as Pope says, "Reasoned downward till they doubt of God." And this may have been the reason why in the early revelation given to the Israelites, *both doctrines were taken for granted*. It was not necessary to *inform* the people that they had a soul, that that soul was the *same* from infancy to age, or that it would remain the same when its tabernacle was taken down, any more than it was necessary to inform them that there was *a* God. And when in future communications of the Divine Spirit, these truths are dwelt upon, as we have seen, and placed in a glorious light, they are dwelt upon as indisputable truths established in the belief of the people, though still *without such definitions of their mode*, as were adapted to satisfy metaphysical curiosity. These convictions were, if not themselves a revelation, at least tantamount to one on these essential sub-

Existence
of the
Deity.

jects. And these notions are found everywhere amongst mankind, and in general less interfered with in proportion to the simplicity of a people: so that if the Getes are found in any sense *ἀθανατίζοντες*, we are not to suppose they derived their notion from Indian, Egyptian, or Grecian philosophy, any more than that the American Indians have so derived it; but that in their case, as in that of some other tribes of the same general family, the convictions of nature and the inheritance of ancient tradition, had been less exposed to the debasement of physical theories than among the people with whom Herodotus and other Greeks had been more familiar: unless indeed it should appear that these tribes had also enjoyed the instructions of teachers, such as are represented by the half Mythic Orpheus, or by Zalmoxis, who revived and gave additional energy to this portion of their creed.

CHAPTER VI.

MOSAIC REVELATION.

SOMEWHERE about 400 years before ^{Mosaic Revelation} the period assigned to the Trojan war, when Egypt had again received its ancient dynasty, and after fruitless chastisements, had eagerly returned to its former "wallowing in the mire;" when Assyria and Babylon were approaching the acmé of prosperity, and sinking in their religion to the sublunary world; when the Pelasgi and Hellenes were taking up their positions on the Mediterranean coasts, and cultivating a language destined to be the vehicle of religious philosophy to the heathen world; *a fresh Revelation from Heaven*, attested by a series of signs and wonders in the presence of a vast population, the fame of which pervaded surrounding nations, was given to the sons of Israel, who were constituted a kingdom of priests to the human race.

This revelation *affirmed authoritatively* all that was true of the ancient traditions, it committed to monumental materials what had been written on the heart, and had faded thence, and made the most important additions to the human knowledge of the nature and

attributes of God, and his relation and disposition towards mankind. It was there and then (as Bunsen himself remarks) that *history was born*, a history over which in this case a marvellous Providence has watched to keep it in its purity, and to preserve it in safety amid all the wonderful changes of the fate of the people to whom it was entrusted.

In the Am-
phyctionic
council.

After the lapse of about 500 years, when Greece had united *its counsels*, but had almost entirely transformed its ancient traditions into seductive forms, when the Epos with its marvellous power had recommended every form of immorality by the example of its gods; the Jewish state had also attained its acmé. Its experience, recorded with a faithfulness which concealed none of the faults and crimes of the people or its most eminent men, in which rebuke is abundant, but praise is rare; presents a series of *lessons* divinely adapted for the instruction of states and individuals in all ages¹.

David and
Solomon.

This then may be regarded as almost, if not entirely, the midnight of heathenism, as far as relates to the remains among them of

¹ That the narrative of the Pentateuch is a faithful record of absolutely historical events no unsophisticated mind can doubt. Yet there seems no reason why they should not *also* have been intended to have all the instructive value of *myths*. The ancient Israelites became in this way according to St Paul, τύποι ἡμῶν.

the divine light of their traditions. In a moral point of view they had to sink still lower, because they had to abuse higher privileges.

But in the Holy Land a meridian glory shone, which, in all respects, was calculated to attract the attention of surrounding nations.

Condition
of the
Hebrew
people and
character
of the
Hebrew
revelation.

Considered as an *external* manifestation of the Divine presence and goodness this Theocracy was, perhaps, in itself, more illustrious than any condition of any people which has ever existed. Its power was established, and its frontier defended from the Taurus on the North, the Euphrates on the East, Arabia Petrea and its ports on the Red Sea in the South. It stood in remarkable relations of friendship with a people who were at that time to the civilized world what Britain is at the present day.

It had not only acquired to exuberant wealth, in which all the richest countries of the world contributed to its glory, but to a high condition of mental cultivation. Science and literature had attained that exalted form which both assume when in unison with the sublimest subject which can occupy and inspire the soul of man. Nature was studied in all its extent, not as a mere collection of physical facts, still less as a set of physical theories, but as the productions of Him for

whose sake, as well as for their own, they were thought worthy of being studied and admired. "O Lord! how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all," said the father of that philosophical prince, who had carried his investigations into all the departments of nature.

Philosophy, in its noblest sense, was encouraged and taught by the highest authority—the result of patient observation, of far-seeing experience, and of Divine instruction. Poetry, with all the aids of its handmaid harmony, took for its subjects those themes which at once exalt and purify the soul. And, apart from the sacredness of its themes and the Divine inspiration of its doctrines, the sacred poetry of the Hebrews which flourished from that period has all the highest attributes which have ever been found in productions of that kind.

Those parts only of this literature have come down to us which appear to have been consecrated to religious use, and which formed an important part of their liturgy. But it is quite impossible, with the thousand songs of Solomon himself, and other writings of this kind, resulting from the encouragement of so great an example, that a vast amount of valuable literature should not have existed at this time, and attracted the atten-

tion of those nations who had so many means and so many other reasons of communication with the Hebrews. Nor did this decline when the political power of the people began to do so. The withdrawment of the outward favour of Jehovah was not at first connected with the loss of spiritual means. On the contrary, the spirit of inspiration seemed to have been given in special abundance. "The Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by His messengers, *rising up betimes* and sending, because he had compassion on His people and His dwelling-place." ^{2 Chron. xxxvi. 15.}

The profound attainments and vast information of the Prophets have been acknowledged on all hands.

"This Hebrew literature was carefully collected in the days of Hezekiah, who maintained skilful scribes to collate together and to write out copies of the Holy Scriptures." Prideaux. And though with the defection of their rulers there was a wide departure from the truth on the part of the people, and it thus became a national sin, yet there is every proof that a large number of the people, in their distress, found their consolation in their sacred books, and carried them as their best possession into the countries whither they were led captive.

In later times the Israelites are found in large numbers in Egypt, either as a place of ^{The Jews in Egypt.}

refuge from their Eastern conquerors, or as a place of captivity.

About the year 610 B.C., Necho is a conqueror at Babylon, and unites with his numerous Babylonian captives the king of Judah and many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And, according to Josephus, many Hebrew refugees went down to Egypt when Jerusalem was finally destroyed.

Profes-
sional
Hebrew
scholars.

It appears too, that in proportion as the national Hebrews became depressed in their political power, and had nothing else to boast of, they prided themselves in their literature ; and when, after the Babylonian Captivity, the dialect in which it was written was no longer understood by the common people, a numerous and respectable profession of scribes made it the whole object of their lives to copy and interpret their sacred books.

Hebrew
literature
takes a
philoso-
phic form.

And with the view, perhaps, of making it more palatable to philosophers of other nations, they seem to have connected with their explanations of these writings some of those Pythagorean and Platonic opinions which had, in fact, originated from the Hebrew Scriptures. And the LXX. translators adopted many of the terms of this philosophy in their version.

Septuagint
translation.

With regard to the *translation* of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, the *colouring*

which appears in the work of *Aristeas*, the principal authority for the time and manner in which the LXX. translation was made, has exposed his whole account to the scepticism of some modern writers. With the exception, however, of a few unimportant circumstances, that account has been deemed worthy of credit, not only by ancient writers from Josephus downward, but by the most sober investigators since, at least as to its main features. But *Aristobulus*, a peripatetic Jew, who lived at least as early as Ptolemy Philometer, asserts, that at the instance of Demetrius, under P. Lagus the work was proposed and was carried out under P. Philadelphus. And this testimony is shewn by *Hävernick* to be quite unexceptionable, from the age of the writer, the simplicity of the statement, and its perfect agreement with the history of the time.

Fabric. 2.
280.
Born about
180 B. C.

Einleitung
in das alte
Test. Vol. 1.
part 1, p. 39.

But the same writer in a fragment given by Clem. Alex. states with equal simplicity, that before Demetrius Phalereus and the time of Alexander, translations had been made into Greek of the events of the Exodus, the conquest of Palestine, and a description of the Hebrew institutions *καὶ τῆς ὅλης νομοθεσίας ἐπεξήγησις*. Nor does there seem much weight in the objections made to it, as these are stated for example by Prideaux. “*It looks*

Strom. i. 22.

Translations before
the LXX.

Vol. i. p. 38.

all like fiction: the light of reason, or else ancient traditions might have led the Greeks to the saying of many things, especially in moral matters, which accord with what is found in the writings of Moses; and if not, yet there were other ways of coming at them without such a version. Converse with the Jews might suffice for it, and particular instruction from some of their learned men might be had for such purpose; and such Clearchus tells us *Aristotle had from a learned Jew in lower Asia.*" All this may be a reason why the Greeks had other means of obtaining an acquaintance with Jewish matters; but is surely no valid objection to the unvarnished statement of Aristobulus. It is hardly likely that a work of this extent should have been undertaken, if the habit of translating had not existed before, and if portions of the Hebrew writings already in the hands of Greeks had not *excited the desire of obtaining the whole* of that most ancient collection. If the statements of Aristeas, and after him of Josephus, are not in the main true as to the rise of the LXX. Translation, then we have *no account whatever of its origin*: it is therefore surely no proof that no translation existed before it, that we have only the single testimony of Aristobulus.

Doubted.

Without
solid
reason.

CHAPTER VII.

APPEARANCE OF PHILOSOPHY IN GREECE.

IT is however a remarkable fact, that from the time of the dispersion of the Israelites, a number of distinguished men begin to emerge from the darkness of heathenism. We say the *darkness* of heathenism, for though in Greece the arts of civilized life were beginning to attain a high degree of perfection, this was one circumstance which detained the minds of men in the physical world.

Appearance of philosophy in Greece from the time of the dispersion of the Israelites.

The Poems of Homer and Hesiod, or of that class of writers who may be represented by these names, had fixed the thoughts of men by a kind of ravishment on a scene in which the gods performed for their entertainment, in characters wherein at the best human nature was merely made romantic, but by which also the worst vices were exemplified.

Effects of the Epos.

And the professors of the fine arts contributed in their way to increase this mischief. The temples which once contained only the deity to which they were consecrated in some simple form, became galleries of sculpture, in which foreign deities, and human heroes, and

Of the condition of the fine arts.

successful gymnasts were exhibited for equal adoration¹.

The Zeus
of Phidias
and statues
of Aphro-
syne.

It has been remarked with regard to the statue of Zeus by Phidias, that it tended by its wonderful perfection, as a work of art, to establish in the minds of men the notion of the human nature of their supreme deity; and it is easy to see what would result from the fact, that at length the statues of Venus constantly exhibited the likeness of some distinguished courtesan.

Nothing in
the con-
dition of
the Greeks
to give rise
to a purer
theology.

If then the state of things when Thales and Pythagoras appeared, be rightly viewed, when the vulgar and the educated were alike estranged from all that was spiritual in their notions of the gods, and the ancient traditions buried deep below the splendid edifices and consecrated forms of their theology; it will appear in the highest degree unlikely, from what we know of the history of the human mind, that the purer theology which so suddenly burst upon the heathen world could have been of genuine Greek extraction. The

¹ The Cynics in after time severely lashed this folly. Ctenomachus, in a work called *φωρὰ γοήτων*, cited by Eusebius, *Præp. Ev.* 231, remarking on the qualities by virtue of which a hero was endowed with immortality, mentions the prowess of *boxing*. Now in all justice, says he, the prize for hitting hard ought to be given to the wild asses, and then we should have had an oracular response of this kind.

ἔξοκος ἀθανάτων ὄνος ἀγριος.

mere Greek could no more have given birth to the philosophy of Thales and Pythagoras, than he could have written the books of Moses or the Psalms of David.

It is a bare assumption of false philosophy¹, that the human mind can by any kind or degree of reflexion raise the standard of its knowledge on religious subjects. *It has never done so. Its tendency has always been the other way.* And the world has never had a more melancholy proof of this than in the outrageous ungodliness to which this boasted power of the human mind has led, in that country where the boast has been the loudest.

The human mind has never originated religious truth.

¹ The entire credit of the *invention* of their religious philosophy, however, is given to the Greeks by Thirlwall in his History, *on the authority of Ritter* as having impartially weighed the evidence. Now Ritter, in the first place, denies that the Hebrews '*possessed any species of philosophy*,' and then, in speaking about the Greek philosophy, thinks it sufficient to shew that India and Egypt afforded the Greeks no assistance, while he takes no notice of the Hebrews. If by philosophy is meant a system entirely based on speculation, it may be well allowed that the Greeks were the principal authors of it. But it strangely happens that those parts of the so-called Greek philosophy on which almost all their fame is built, is exactly that which approaches *most nearly to the truths of revelation*, and all those *conclusions* of philosophy which won for their alleged authors the title of *divine*, are found in much greater purity in the Hebrew writings. Unless, therefore, Ritter and his school consent to give up from the definition of philosophy almost all that is not frivolous and false, he is guilty of an unfairness in his argument which is unworthy of an honest man.

Vol. i. p. 50, and p. 130, &c.

When a mind that has a particle of sobriety left, can believe that the corrupt period even of Judaism, with all its advantages, could have *naturally* given rise, nay, could, according to *Strauss*, have woven out of their own brain the character of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the whole history of his life; then we may indeed, *à fortiori*, believe in the spontaneous regeneration of Greek philosophy in the sixth century before the Christian æra.

What the
Greeks did
invent.

That the Greeks of that period soon became *fertile* in *invention* is unquestionable; but all which they invented was more or less false, as far as religion was concerned, and was a debasement of the genuine truths which had fallen into their hands.

We may not, perhaps, be able to point out to absolute demonstration the source from which these sages drew their better notions. But if we can find in their history the *probability* that they had the means of obtaining light which their own country did not possess, it will furnish us with a cause which is adequate to the effect, in the absence of such cause on any other supposition. They did not obtain their light from heathen foreigners, except in cases where foreign individuals had themselves been instructed from the East. Traditions less sophisticated doubtless existed

among some of the barbarian tribes who had migrated towards them since the settlement of the Hellenes in Greece, but these were all very far below the best doctrines of the renowned Greek philosophy. The purer religion, which has been ascribed to Orpheus, is all of a much later date, and Diogenes Laertius is right in repudiating what might really have existed as Orphic in those times as the foundation of Greek philosophy. "If," says he, "it is right to call a man a philosopher who has proclaimed such things as he has about the gods, I know not what name ought to be given to one who has had the temerity to lay to their charge the whole range of human passions."

Diog.
Laert.
Proæmium
iv.

Thales is represented as standing at the head of this movement in Greece. Of the celebrated Seven, who represent a greater number of distinguished men¹, *Thales* was "sapientissimus in septem, qui primus de talibus rebus quæsivit."

Thales 640
B.C.

Cic. Leg.
ii. 11.
Nat. Deor.
i. 10.

Diogenes Laertius refers to three authors,^{1. 9.} among whom is Herodotus, for the tradition that *Thales* was a *Phœnician*—that when *Ni-leus* was banished from that country *Thales* came with him, and settled as a citizen at *Miletus*. The ἀποφθέγματα ascribed to *Thales* are these:

a Phœni-
cian.

¹ Diog. Lært. i. 9, mentioned thirteen who had been reckoned among the seven wise men.

Πρεσβύτατον τῶν ὄντων θεός, ἀγέννητος γάρ.
 Τὸ θεῖον, τὸ μήτε ἄρχην ἔχειν μήτε τελευτήν.
 Κάλλιστον κόσμος ποίημα γὰρ θεοῦ.
 Ἀρχὴν δὲ τῶν πάντων ὕδωρ.

Diog.
 Laer. i. 9.

‘And that Night was one day earlier than day.’

Now we have here elements of the true cosmogony. Thales has declared in these formulæ that the Deity is uncreated, and is therefore before all things; He has neither beginning nor end—that the world is most beautiful because it is His work, and that therefore He is perfect—that the ἀρχή, the first condition of things, was water—that night preceded day by the space of a day, by which he seems to have taken the creation of the dark abyss to be the first act, and the creation of light the second. This might easily have been derived from the Mosaic account, “there was darkness on the face of the abyss, and the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and God said, Let there be light, and there was light; and the evening and the morning were the first day.”

The sense in which Thales has taken the word ἄρχη in connexion with water, is plain from his other statements, *i. e.* not as the element out of which all things sprung, but as the primary state or condition of the crude creation, before it was formed into a κόσμος—nor does Aristotle venture to class him with

the φυσιόλογοι, at the head of whom he places *Anaximander*, the pupil of Thales. This Greek, ^{Phys. III. 4, 7.} it seems, had refined upon the simple tradition of his Semitic tutor, by "teaching ἀρχὴν καὶ στοιχεῖον ἄπειρον, without defining whether it was water, or air, or what it was." That is, by defining ἀρχή as the elementary principle of things, and then adopting a physical ἄπειρον for the τὸ θεῖον τὸ μήτε ἀρχὴν μήτε τελεύτην ἔχον of Thales. That he did this, is evident from what Aristotle says—"There is no origin of this ἀρχή. . . . as they say who allow of no other ἀρχαί but the infinite. . . . and that is the divine—τὸ θεῖον—for that it is immortal and indestructible, as *Anaximander* and most of the φυσιόλογοι say." A speculative and unexplained ἄπειρον sounded better as an ἀρχή in this sense, doubtless, than the ὕδωρ of Thales; but it was a deprivation of the doctrine of Thales, who had no other idea than that of a personal Creator who formed the world from a chaotic and watery state, and to whom that world was most *beautiful* as being His production.

Aristotle in his own manner has also ignored ^{Metaph. I. 3.} the tradition of Thales; he says: "Thales says that water was the origin, λαβὼν ἔσως¹ τὴν ὑπόληψιν ταύτην ἐκ τοῦ πάντων ὁρᾶν τὴν τροφήν ὕγραν

¹ How strange it is that such a man as Ritter should so have overlooked this ἔσως of Aristotle as to say, quoting this ^{Hist. Phil. p. 199.}

οὐσαν; and after him Plutarch and others had transformed the ὕδωρ of Thales to ὑγρον, and made this wisest of the wise men the author of a theory which is destitute of common sense.

Nat. Deor.
i. 10.

The remarks in Cicero are more in accordance with the respect due to this great man. "Thales Milesius aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem eam mentem quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret,"—that water was the beginning of things, but that God was that mind who *formed* all things out of water. This is very different from saying that from experiments he was led to conclude that the world *grew out* of it.

Solon, 630
B.C.

We mention *Solon* in this connexion only to remark the manifest difference between him and Thales. There is no proof that he addicted himself to philosophy at all. He was a native Greek—a politician, whose life was spent in establishing a republic, and in opposing the claims of Pisistratus, their hereditary ruler.

Pythagoras, about
600 B.C.

A still more important personage than Thales, and one whose doctrines exercised a more permanent influence on the minds of men, not only in Greece but in neighbouring

passage, '*He is represented as maintaining that all things are nourished by moisture!*' This is plainly a mere conjecture of Aristotle.

nations, was *Pythagoras*. Of him the accounts are more copious, and, though doubtless mixed with fable, contain points of agreement from which we may make a sufficient approach to truth as to the nature of his doctrines and the source from which they were probably derived.

Diog. Laert. says, his first instructor was Pherecydes (a Syrian, according to Porphyry), and who derived his instruction from the *arcana* of the Phœnicians, according to Suidas. Jamblichus and Porphyry have both given an account of his life, which substantially agree in the points to which we refer.

Jamblichus says, "He was born in Sidon of Phœnicia; his father removed to Samos, where he put him under the instruction of the Syrian Pherecydes."

Further, that Pythagoras at an early age made a visit to his native country, where he met the *προφῆται*, the descendants of Mochus, and other Tyrian Hierophants, was made acquainted with all the *τελεταί* in Babylon and Tyre, and with those sacred rites for which many parts of Syria are celebrated. That his object was not a superstitious one, but a desire for knowledge on sacred subjects¹.

¹ Bentley, in his remarks on this account of Jamblichus, does not object to his statement of the *facts* in general, but of the *dates*. The same story is told by Syncellus, and Apu-

Ch. vi.

That he went from thence into Egypt, whence he was taken by Cambyzes into Babylon. That he returned to his own country, and after remaining there some time went into Italy, where he collected a kind of congregation of men and their wives and children, who built for him a large place to lecture in, called *ὀμακοεῖον*; and this was the foundation of the celebrated Magna Græcia.

Pythagoras
a preacher.

The account of Jamblichus shews most clearly that Pythagoras was not a speculative philosopher, but a dogmatic preacher of truths which he had acquired in his travels, and that his object was to influence the moral condition of the people.

His doctrine, as was likely, was mixed with error, but it contained some important points of truth, which were not his own inventions, which could not have been derived from native Greeks, unless partly from the followers of Thales or from Thales himself, but which he had ample opportunities of obtaining in countries where the Hebrews, under the patronage of Cyrus and his successors, had again acquired some importance, and were under the full influence of recent marvellous proofs of the *Providence of God*.

His great
doctrine of
the Provi-
dence of
God.

It is remarkable that this doctrine of a *leius* makes Pythagoras at Babylon, though before he went into Egypt.

Divine Providence was one of the most distinguishing points of the Pythagorean theology.

Jamblichus says, "He was *fully convinced* Ch. xxx. respecting the Deity that He *is*, and that He is so disposed to the human race as to watch over it without neglecting it. For that we require a government against which we cannot rebel, and such was the Divine government, the character of God being such that He is worthy of universal rule."

With regard to his sentiments respecting the Deity, and the creation, Justin Martyr says, "The words of Pythagoras are these: 'God is *one*, and He is not, as some suppose, out of the system of the world, *ἐκτὸς τῆς διακοσμήσεως*, but entirely in it, in the whole sphere the power which presides over all production, the mingling—*κρᾶσις*—of the whole; ever-living, who manages His own forces, and performs His own works, the luminary in heaven, the Father of all things, the mind which gives life and motion to the whole.'"

Cohort. ad Græcos 19.

The same sentiment is also given by Justin Martyr, in language ascribed by him to Pythagoras:

κατοικεῖν αὐτὸς ἐν ᾧ πεποίηκε

Now allowing that some additions have been made by Pythagorean writers to the dogmas of Pythagoras, and a clearer light

Just. M. de Monarch. 2.

reflected on them from Divine revelation, there is so much substantial agreement in heathen as well as early Christian accounts of his doctrine, that it must surely be a *reckless* and culpable disregard of tradition, flowing as it does in this case from sources whose statements are *unquestioned* on other subjects, by which modern philosophers have resolved to exclude *at any rate* the influence of foreign theology from his system.

Pythagoras
disavows
the credit
of invent-
ing Divine
knowledge.

The paramount assumption of this philosophy, which has been tacitly embraced by our own historians and theorists, and against which *no evidence* is sufficient to weigh, is that the human reason is *capable of everything*: it can invent its own cosmogony, its own history, its own theology. It is remarkable that in this case men have been resolved to force upon Pythagoras a credit which he himself was most careful to *disavow*. His invention of the word *philosopher* is a standing monument of this. His maxim being that God alone is σοφός.

Prom. VIII.

Diog. Laert. says, φιλοσοφίαν δὲ πρῶτος ὠνόμασε Πυθαγόρας καὶ ἑαυτὸν φιλόσοφον... καθά φησιν Ἡρακλείδης ὁ ποντικός... μηδένα γὰρ εἶναι σοφὸν ἄνθρωπον ἄλλ' ἢ θεόν.

It is in fact absolutely in the teeth of all the accounts that we have of this great man, that his greatness was built on his own

speculations, unless indeed his mathematical attainments may be called such.

The absurd bent of a race of genuine Greeks who followed him, to think of nothing but *physical theories*, led some of them, as had been the case with regard to Thales, to ignore his real theology, and to distinguish him as the author of a speculation which was perfectly incomprehensible as applied to the nature and origin of the universe—that is, his *so called theology of numbers*.

That he applied mathematical *illustrations* to his views of the universe, is more than probable; and the light in which Jamblichus has placed this subject, is undoubtedly the true one. He says, “Pythagoras held that the sight of the whole heaven, with the stars revolving in it, was of all things most beautiful, if one meditated on *their order*—*εἰ τις καθορώη τὴν τάξιν*. But that it derived this perfection by its partaking of the nature of the First Intelligence, and this was, according to him, the *nature of numbers*, and rational plans pervading everything, according to which all these things are exquisitely arranged, and suitably adapted to each other.” Now, taken in connexion with what Pythagoras is distinguished for having taught, the ever-present care of a personal God, the only interpretation of this passage is, that the First

Vit.
Pythag.
xii. 59.

and not by demonstration. For otherwise it were absurd, that the followers of the Samian Pythagoras, repulsing those who demanded demonstrations, should suppose that *this was proof*, αὐτὸς ἔφα, and that this alone was a sufficient foundation of what was stated."

Influence
of his
doctrine.

Bk. x. § 3,
p. 600.

The doctrines of Pythagoras are on all hands allowed to have had an extensive influence over the philosophers of Greece. In the time of Plato, Pythagoras and the mode of life he recommended were still held in high esteem. Thus, in the Republic of Plato, after having shewn at length how *useless* to the interests of public and private life Homer and his works had been, Plato remarks: "Nor was he beneficial to posterity. He laid the foundation of no *discipline* to which any followers of his attached themselves, and which they called after his name, as did Pythagoras—
ὥσπερ Πυθαγόρας αὐτός τε διαφερόντως ἐπὶ τούτῳ ἠγαπήθη, καὶ οἱ ὕστεροι ἔτι καὶ νῦν Πυθαγόρειον τρόπον ἐπονομάζοντες τοῦ βίου διαφανεῖς πῃ δοκοῦσιν εἶναι ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις."

Plato, 430
B.C.

The tra-
ditions of
Pythagoras
corrupted
by specula-
tions of
some of his
followers.

It appears, however, by the time of Plato, the minds of most of the Grecian philosophers, though still in general retaining in their systems the dogmas which Thales and Pythagoras had derived from tradition, were occupied by such speculations on the external nature of things, as made these dogmas of no

importance in their philosophy. This was almost universally the case with the Ionian school.

Anaxagoras of Clazomene, who was born <sup>Anaxago-
ras.</sup> about 40 years after the death of Thales, and five after what is most commonly reckoned as the time of the death of Pythagoras, is distinguished as having left his opinions *in writing*: *πρῶτος δὲ Αναξαγόρας καὶ βιβλίον ἔξ-
ἔδωκε συγγραφῆς.* <sup>Diog.
Laert. II.
3, 8.</sup> And this itself implies habits of retired speculation which the early masters of philosophy were not addicted to. There is <sup>Not an
atheist.</sup> no reason to think that he was *theoretically* an Atheist. Eusebius defends him from this <sup>Prep. Ev.
27, A.</sup> charge. "From what we know," says he, "of the opinions of Anaxagoras and his predecessors, we may justly reject the charge of Atheism made against them....At any rate this will appear with regard to Anaxagoras, from what we shall adduce to shew, that he is the first of the Greeks who is mentioned as representing mind as the presiding cause of the universe," that is, probably, the first of Greek Philosophical *writers*¹. It appears that the charge of Atheism was brought against Anaxagoras by the Greek populace, because he had *undeified the sun*, and that he was nearly stoned to death by them, and

¹ Fabricius, i. 813, refers to two works of Anaxagoras, the *φυσικά*, and the *τετραγωνισμὸς κύκλου*.

Reason
why so
called.

Prep. Ev.
750, c.

escaped a capital punishment only by the intercession of Pericles. "And this," says Eusebius, "because he made the creator of the sun to be God, and not the sun itself." Anaxagoras, however, did not *retain* God in his thoughts; his speculations were carried on without any reference to Him as an efficient cause, and by the time of Socrates the Ionic philosophy had become absorbed in the mere physical view of nature.

Change of
philosopher
to *sophist*.

The teachers of this school were no longer contented with the Pythagorean title of *Philosopher*, they called themselves σοφισταί; but they at length so little adorned this title, that in the time of Plato it had become a term of *reproach*; and Socrates made it an important object of his life to counteract the mischief of their influence.

They were, however, in the early time of Socrates the most popular instructors of youth, and some of them were eminent for their attainments in physical studies.

Socrates,
469 B. C.

Socrates received his first instructions from them, and under their direction acquired a lively interest in physical pursuits. But as his mind matured he was dissatisfied with such speculations, and sought for something more consonant to sober reason as an account of the origin of things.

His views and experience in this respect

are given by Xenophon and Plato in terms not very different. Xenophon says, "No one ^{Mem. i. 1, 11.} ever witnessed in Socrates any want of piety or sanctity in word or deed. For he did not discourse about the nature of the universe and other matters in the manner of most men ^{His dissatisfaction with systems of his time.} (of that time), by speculating as to how the κόσμος, as Sophists called it, came into being (ἐφν according to Kühner's reading), and on what necessary principles, τίσιν ἀνάγκαις, each of the phenomena of the heavens took place, but he convicted of folly all who indulged in such speculations. And he wondered it had not become plain to them that these things were above the reach of human discovery, since their utmost researches had only led to contradictory theories."

Plato makes Socrates say, "When I was ^{Phæd. 96, v.} young I was marvellously eager to be acquainted with that knowledge, which they call the history of nature, for it seemed to me to be a noble thing to know the causes of everything. Why things begin and cease to be, and why they exist. And my mind was tossed up and down in these researches...till at last I concluded that I was absolutely unqualified for such investigations. I became, for instance, even as to subjects which I once thought I well understood, so completely thrown into the dark by these speculations,

that I unlearned all my previous supposed knowledge. But when I heard from a book, which he who read to me said was the work of Anaxagoras, the statement that a *mind* is that which orders and causes everything, I was delighted with this account, and it seemed to me somehow just as it should be that a mind should be the cause of all things, and that if this were so, that mind would order all things for the best...and under this impression I thought with pleasure, that I had found in Anaxagoras a teacher on these subjects after my own heart, and I would not have given up my hopes for anything. So I eagerly seized the volumes and quickly read them through...But I fell headlong from these hopes when I found that the man gave that *mind* nothing to do, and assigned no causes for the arrangement of things in the world than air, æther, water, and absurdities of that sort."

99, B.

"And in this way," says he, "it appears to me, that most philosophers while groping as it were in the dark, by the use of a false term, speak of this as though it were a cause. ψηλαφῶντες οἱ πολλοὶ ὥσπερ ἐν σκότει, ἄλλοτρίῳ ὀνόματι προσχρώμενοι, ὡς αἴτιον αὐτὸ προσαγορεύειν" (*i. e.* they go feeling about like a blind man, and led by a false assumption).

99, C.

"But," he continues, "as to the sovereign

power—*δύναμιν*—by which things are in fact disposed as it was best they should be, this they seek not after nor ascribe to it any preternatural force,...I however would thankfully listen to the instruction of any one who would give me information about such a cause; but as I was robbed of this hope I was obliged to set out on a second voyage for its discovery."

Now the entire sentiment of all this is opposed to the idea that *Socrates* at least thought it sufficient to consult his own *consciousness*, to obtain even the elements of philosophy, and is a condemnation of those who do. And if with regard to outward physical nature he deemed it presumptuous, as Xenophon said he did, "to pry into those things which the gods had not thought proper to reveal;" how much more would he have been dissatisfied with *à priori* speculations about the nature of the Deity himself! The knowledge which he had possessed before his mind had been thrown into confusion by such speculations consisted doubtless of the elements of the Pythagorean doctrine, and when he found a work which seemed to have for its basis the doctrine that all things are in the hands of some intelligent power who orders all things for the best, it accorded, to his delight, with his own convictions; and he wished to establish this doctrine by an induc-

Did not speculate on divine things.

Mem. iv. 7, 6.

Possessed only Pythagorean traditions.

tion of proofs that all things are managed in accordance with this principle.

Cited by
Euseb.
Prep. Ev.
728, D.

It is probable he afterwards became more acquainted with the Pythagorean system. Numenius¹, in a fragment cited by Eusebius, says, "Plato, who was himself a Pythagorean, was aware that Socrates derived from no other source his peculiar mode of speaking about the Deity."

His notions
remained
unsettled.

But though as a practical philosopher in his discourses on the conduct of life, as well as by his own example, he was worthy of being a second Pythagoras, it appears that he lived and died an unsatisfied inquirer after the truth, and succeeded rather in confounding what was erroneous than in establishing what was true. Aristocles² says of him, in speaking of the confusion of men's minds before the time of Plato, that Socrates added fuel to the fire, as Plato acknowledged, and that πάντα δὲ ἐγείρων λόγον, καὶ περὶ πάντων ζητῶν ἔφθη τελευτήσας. Death came upon him while still raising every question, and still inquiring about all things. The knowledge of Socrates, as far as we can ascertain what

Euseb.
Prep. Ev.
511, A.

¹ Numenius Apamæensis is mentioned by Porphyry among the Pythagoreans and Platonics, in his *Life of Plotinus*, and is cited by Origen, *Cont. Cels.* iii. p. 198. Vid. Fabric. ii. 63.

² Aristocles of Messene, a Peripatetic, preceptor of Alexander Aphrodisæus.

was really his, exhibits all the difference from that of Plato in his later works, which might be expected from the greater opportunities which the latter had after his master's death in foreign countries.

It is however, perhaps, impossible to gather from accounts which have come down to us, what the real opinions of Socrates were, except very generally. It is most obvious that Plato has made his name, in very many cases, merely the vehicle of his own opinions. And, though not to the same extent, Xenophon, who made his Cyrus a Socratic philosopher of his own practical school, has done the same with Socrates, and we may, therefore, fairly take the extant writings of these men, as conveying sentiments which they themselves had acquired by research and meditation.

At the death of Socrates about 400 B.C., Plato, Plato, and the other friends of the martyr, left Athens. At that time Plato was about 28 years of age. After spending some time at Megara, where Euclid was, he travelled into Egypt, Italy, and other countries. His object in going into Italy was to become more perfectly acquainted with the Pythagorean philosophy, which was still much cultivated in Magna Græcia; and it was *after this period* that the *Timæus*, *Philebus*, *Laws*, &c., were

Diog.
Laert. iii.8.

His travels.

Stallbaum's
Introduc-
tion to
Plato's
Works.

written, which are so rich in *collected* materials of truth.

Diogenes L. says he went from Italy into Egypt—*ἐνθεν τε εἰς Αἴγυπτον παρὰ τοὺς προφῆτας.*

Life of
Apollon.
p. 3.

Philostratus says of Plato that he went into Egypt, and mixing up what he there learned from the prophets and priests with his own speculations, exhibited them in a kind of pictorial form.

Inst. Div.
iv. 2.
Civ. Dei,
viii. 11.
Ad Gentes,
46, A.

Lactantius, Augustine, and Clem. Alexandrinus, say that he consulted the Magi, and became acquainted with the religious ordinances of the Jews.

Without being able to discover for ourselves on what grounds this positive assertion is made on the part of these distinguished writers of the early church, we cannot, to say the least¹, see why their united testimony should not be considered fully as trustworthy as that of heathen men who lived near their own times, especially as there is nothing in the testimony of the latter which is not consistent with that of the former, and which does not make it probable together with other circumstances, that Plato and others had good opportunities of becoming acquainted with teachers so well able to supply them with the knowledge which they were earnestly seeking.

¹ In making *historical* statements these writers were narrowly watched by *enemies*.

In fact, no *real historical objection* has ever been brought against it; and none of any kind but what arises from mere assumptions of a philosophy which takes for certain the falsehood of every tradition which agrees not with its hypothesis.

Plato had good opportunities of increasing his religious knowledge;

Without asserting the exact truth of every one of the traditions to which we refer, we maintain, that they are so general, and so confidently maintained by veracious and learned men, that it is far more consistent with critical prudence to admit, that there is as much truth in them as will account for facts which are otherwise unaccountable, viz. that men at these times emerged from a state of darkness, which was more blinding and obstructive to mental and moral progress than a state of barbarism, and in which, as the history of the human race constantly shews, their natural tendency is always to corrupt rather than to improve the religious and moral truth they possess. If it were only probable that the means were within the reach of these reformers for reviving ancient traditions which had been corrupted, and obtaining other elements of truth of the same kind, it is a much more rational and sound solution of the difficulty to suppose they used them, than to assume any inventive tendency of the human mind in subjects of that kind.

and it is reasonable to think he used them.

And this is the most rational account of the improvement in religious knowledge.

It is denied on the part of the jealous advocates of Greek philosophy, and of the Greek genius, that there are any traces to be found in their writings of the *acknowledgement* of such obligation to foreign sources. This is indeed *not true*, but if it were, it would be no proof that their doctrines were original.

Why such obligations not more acknowledged.

Prep. Ev. 461, B.

It does not seem to have been thought necessary *in general* by writers of those times, to acknowledge literary obligation of any kind, even in cases in which we know that they were largely indebted. Eusebius remarks, "It ought not to be a matter of surprise, if we assert that it was possible the Greek philosophers furnished themselves from the Hebrew doctrines, because on other subjects they collected their science from Egyptians, Chaldeans, and other foreigners, and are still convicted of ambitiously borrowing in order to enrich their own productions."

The illustrations he gives of this, transferred from the *Stromata* of Clemens, might some of them be objected to, as cases in which one poet has borrowed the ideas or expressions of another; a licence which has been always allowed to poets.

Prep. Ev. p. 464.

But Porphyry, in a long passage given by Eusebius, has shewn, by a large number of examples from ancient and more modern writers of all kinds, that the practice of thus

pluming themselves with borrowed feathers, and that without the slightest acknowledgment, was universal.

In fact, there was very much of the character of poetry about most of the writings of Plato, and some of the pieces of Xenophon. As we have remarked from an ancient author, they were *pictorial* sketches often, in which whatever was introduced was so fashioned and coloured as to harmonize with the piece, and thus become, in a manner, the writer's own.

Yet it does not seem to have entered the mind of these great men, when giving an account of the nature of the Deity, and the history of creation, for instance, that it would be supposed possible the foundation of such knowledge should be the result of their own meditation merely¹. This absurdity was left for a philosophy which has become infinitely more vain in its imaginations than the Greeks ever were.

On the contrary, the idea is often *repudiated*.

Did not claim them as discoveries,

but owns them to be derived.

The belief of Plato was, that the ancients

¹ Bunsen is a sober man compared with most of his contemporary philosophers ; yet he exults with great magniloquence in the fact, that the Egyptians by the pure exercise of their own consciousness—selbstgewüsstheit,—had *discovered* the whole circle of their gods some time before the scripture account of the creation of the world !

lived nearer to the Deity than the men of his times, and became thus acquainted with knowledge otherwise unattainable.

Timæus,
p. 40, E.

He says, after having spoken of the Supreme Being, and of the creation, in terms which will be examined below, "To speak about the other divine natures—*δαιμόνων*¹—and to know their origin, is beyond our power

From tradi-
tion.

—*μείζον ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς*—but we must believe those who have spoken on the subject before, who were, as they said, descendants of the gods, and who well knew their own ancestors; for it is impossible we should disbelieve the descendants of the gods, although they speak without probable and necessary proofs—*ἀνευ τε εἰκότων καὶ ἀναγκαίων ἀποδείξεων λέγουσι*²."

p. 16, D.

Again, in the *Philebus*, he says, "the ancients, who were greater than we are, and who lived nearer the gods, have handed down to us this tradition—*ταύτην φήμην παρέδοσαν*." Thus he speaks of Priam, as *ἐγγυὲς θεῶν γεγονότα*, and other heroes as *θεῶν ἀγχίσποροι*. His idea being, that the human race was derived from the *Divine*, and the more ancient they were, the more nearly they approached that

Rep. III.
388, B. and
391, A.

¹ The *δαίμονες* of Plato correspond to the angels of Scripture, of whose origin nothing is there said—hence the ignorance of Plato on the subject.

² Where Stallbaum remarks that Plato is here referring satirically to the sophists, who made a great parade of *τὰ εἰκότα* and *τὰς ἀναγκάς*.

origin, and the better they were thus acquainted with the original traditions.

In accordance with which Cicero remarks, Tusc. i. 12.
 “Antiquitas, quo propius aberat ab ortâ et progenie divinâ, hoc melius forsitan ea quæ erant vera cernebat.”

And thus, in speaking about the nature of God, and the early condition of mankind, Plato constantly speaks of some *παλαίος λόγος*.

There is an interesting passage to this effect in the *Laws*: “In forming our state it becomes us to invoke the Deity, and may He hear us, and propitiously listening to us, graciously come to our aid, by helping us to arrange our polity and its laws....” Laws, p. 712, seq.

“If the state must appeal to a power that is supreme, it becomes it to mention the name of that God who reigns supreme over all men of understanding.”

The question is then asked, “Who then is God?”

Before answering this question directly, he proposes to illustrate the subject of ancient government by a *μύθος*, and proceeds to give the ancient legend of the time of Saturn, which states, “That Saturn, well knowing human beings could not of themselves manage a state without violence and corruption, appointed over them beings of a higher order, by which was signified that *a divine immortal*

principle, denominated *law*, was given as the rule by which our minds are to be guided."

He has used the word *μύθος*¹, as Stallbaum intimates, in the sense of a kind of *parable*, by which a philosophical idea is conveyed.

p. 716.

"But now," says he, "let us speak on these subjects as addressing *ourselves to men*," *i.e.* without the help of fable.

"The Deity then, as the *ancient tradition* states, *ὡςπὲρ καὶ ὁ παλαιὸς λόγος*, who holds the beginning, and the end, and the middle of all things, accomplishes his purposes *immediately*—*εὐθείᾳ περαίνει*—in the course of nature. On him attends continually justice, the avenger of such as come short of the Divine law, and he who would be happy waits on her humbly and obediently, but whoever is tempted to violate her precepts is deserted of God, and thus becomes increasingly wicked, till he involves himself and those about him in destruction."

We have here a clear distinction, though Plato does not always observe it, between a philosophical myth, such as the Greeks in general possessed, or *reckoned such*, and the ancient tradition, by which Plato answers the question about the nature of God and His

¹ His own definition of *μύθος*, however, is that of an ancient story which is *founded in fact*. Vid. *infra*.

government,—a distinction pointed out by Stallbaum and others.

Plutarch, speaking of various actions Isis xxv. p. 360. wrongly ascribed to the gods, refers to the opinions of Pythagoras, Plato, and others, as derived from *most ancient theologians*. He Plutarch appeals to tradition. says, “they have done better who give their opinion that the practices which are ascribed to Typhon, Osiris, Isis, are not the deeds of gods but of mighty demons, respecting whom Plato, Pythagoras, Xenocrates, and Chrysippus, *following the ancient theologians*, say that they were men of superior might—*ἐρρωμενεστέρους ἀνθρώπων*—who greatly surpassed us in strength, but having their divine nature debased by evil passions.”

The theologians of antiquity—*οἱ παλαιοὶ θεόλογοι*—are therefore not Pythagoras, Plato, Xenocrates,—but much more ancient authorities, which Plutarch was too much of a heathen to name.

There can be but little doubt, as Eusebius in citing this passage suggests, that Plato referred to the Mosaical account of the *γίγαντες*, the children of men, who are distinguished in the Scripture narrative for their wickedness, and that Plato's *δαίμονες* were the angels.

Porphyry too is so far from believing that the *speculations* of the Greeks had led to the

Euseb. P.
E. 741, B.

knowledge of the truth, that he confesses—
μάτην αὐτοῖς ἡ σοφία ἐξήσκηται—"while," says
he, "foreigners have found a more certain
and saving path to truth."

Enseb. P.
E. 742. A.

In a letter *περὶ ψυχῆς* to the Platonist Boe-
thus, Porphyry says, "You have heard how
much labour has been expended to obtain by
sacrifice *outward purification*, instead of finding
salvation for the soul—*τῆς ψυχῆς τὴν σωτηρίαν*,
—for the way to the gods is brass-bound,
steep, and rugged, many by-paths of which—
ἀτραπούς—barbarians have found, while Greeks
have gone astray, or those who have found it
have corrupted it; but the god has testified
to the discovery of it, by Egyptians, Phœ-
nicians, Chaldeans, Lydians, and Hebrews."

Porphyry
appeals to
foreign in
preference
to Greek
philosophy.

Xenophon
repudiated
speculation
on such
subjects.

Xenophon was an attached follower of
Socrates, and adopted with sober conviction
especially the Pythagorean part of his master's
doctrine; it was a strong opinion in Xeno-
phon's mind, that to speculate on the Divine
nature was both vain and impious.

Works,
Vol. vi. p.
314,
Weiske.

In a letter of his to Æschines he says, "that
the Divine natures are above us, is most
obvious, and it is sufficient for us to reverence
them in the greatness of their power. But
such is their nature that it is neither easy to
discover it nor lawful to seek to do so. For
it is not fitting that servants should know
more respecting the nature or the plans of

their lord than what the service of him requires."

Plato, though he passed beyond the bounds which Xenophon would have prescribed, had the same general feeling in the latter period of his life, when the *Timæus* was written, *viz.* that the human mind required some other teaching than its own perceptions, to understand the Deity aright.

Plato became more convinced of this at the end of his life.

He says, "If, after many persons have said many things respecting the gods and the rise of the universe, we should be unable entirely to make our statements consistent with themselves, and to deliver them as accurate, you must not be surprised, but must be content if we offer such as are inferior to none in probability, remembering that I who speak, and you who hear, *are partakers of human nature*, so that, having had *handed down to us the tradition which is likely*, we ought to inquire no further—ὥστε περὶ τούτων τὸν εἰκότα μῦθον ἀποδεχομένους πρέπει τοῦτου μηδὲν ἔτι πέρα ζητεῖν."

It is needless to remark how different all this is from the tone of modern philosophy, how nobly superior to that petty self-sufficiency which it exhibits, and would injuriously thrust upon the credit of these more right-minded heathen.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRACES OF DERIVED INSTRUCTION IN GREEK WRITERS BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN ÆRA.

Traces of
derived
instruction
in Greek
writers be-
fore Christ.

WE now come to inquire more directly into the traces which are to be found in extant Greek literature, of the use which these writers made of opportunities afforded to them, for obtaining that knowledge which they were seeking after in all directions, but which by their own acknowledgment they could not originate.

Pytha-
goras.

The Pythagorean doctrines, as we have seen, had, by the access of their founder to sources of knowledge not to be met with in Greece, either introduced opinions altogether different from those which prevailed before, or restored the ancient traditions to something like their early purity, so that they were made influential on the lives and hopes of men, which was the great object of the life of Pythagoras. Another class of writers arose after the establishment of a literature founded on the doctrines of Pythagoras, who attached to their productions the name of a foreign philosopher, who lived, if he lived at all, in mythic times, viz. the writers of the *Orphica*. From what we can judge of the few frag-

So-called
Orphica too
doubtful to
be relied
upon.

ments which remain of the genuine Orphica, they contained an imitation of the Pythagorean doctrine in some points, while they retained the *Hellenic Theology*¹ in others. The poems which are at present extant under the name of Orpheus have this character, while they contain doctrines such as prevailed only in a more advanced state of the Greek Theology ; and their antiquity is so generally doubted, that it is scarcely safe to quote them for our purpose.

But from the time of the establishment of the Pythagorean doctrine, a most remarkable difference appears in the Theology of Greek writers, especially on two subjects, viz. the nature of God, and the mode of speaking about a future life. Homer and Hesiod, as we have seen, spake of the gods so as to compromise their *deity*—"their eternal power and godhead." The effect of which was, that though the Hellenes adhered to the ceremonial worship of their gods, "they worshipped them not as God," and either neglected them or despised them. It was impossible for them to feel that they had a *personal* interest in them.

Sudden
change in
Greek
writers
after Py-
thagoras.

Hellenes ;
their notion
of God, and
of a future
life.

¹ *Isocrates* has connected the legendary fate of Orpheus with the crimes of the Orphic poetry of his time, in uttering things about the gods which no man would say against his enemies : Ὀρφεὺς δὲ, ὁ μάλιστα τούτων τῶν λόγων ἀψάμενος, διασπασθεὶς τὸν βίον ἐτελεύτησεν. *Busiris*, 229 v.

So, with regard to a future life, the creed of these poets, and of the Hellenes, was not such as to enable the subject of it to take any interest in the future but a gloomy one.

xī. 486.

The celebrated passage in the *Odyssey* on this subject, impressively sets this before us.

Homer.

Ulysses, on being permitted to take a view of the lower world, recoils with horror at the general view. But he is admitted to the abodes of the élite inhabitants of the lower world, and among these he meets with Achilles, to whom he says,

πρὶν μὲν γάρ σε ζῶν ἐτίομεν, ἴσα θεοῖσιν,
ἀργεῖοι, νῦν αὖτε μέγα κρατέεις νεκρέςσιν.

To which Achilles replies :

μὴ δὴ μοι θάνατόν γε παραύδα, φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ
βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητενέμεν ἄλλῃ
ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίοςτος πολὺς εἴη,
ἢ πᾶσιν νεκρέςσιν κακαφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.

Speak not of comfort to the dead, illustrious chief!
I'd labour as a hireling on the soil,
Fed on the scant means of some living hind
Ignoble, rather than I'd wield the staff
Of sovereign rule o'er all the realms of death.

Hesiod.

Hesiod is classed with Homer as to his theology. Herodotus ascribes to them both the introduction, or rather the establishment, of the same system of the gods. Homer had referred to the Islands of the Blessed, and Hesiod has a fine passage as to the life of the heroes there; but this is with him a story

of the golden age. The present race of men have no interest in it, they are in a hopeless condition of sin and misery, and no reference to any such future hopes for them is made, as may bear upon their conduct here :

τὰ δὲ λείπεται ἄλγεα λυγρὰ
θνητοῖς ἀνθρώποισι· κακοῦ δ' οὐκ ἔσσεται ἀλκή. Works and
Days, 200.

Justice and Modesty have fled away,
And left mankind to grievous sufferings,
From which no hope of rescue will remain.

The contrast between all this and the lyrical teaching of Pindar is remarkable. Improved
Theology of
Pindar. And without asserting that Pindar, who was deeply imbued with the Pythagorean philosophy, has actually borrowed his method from those most ancient and beautiful specimens of lyrical productions which the Hebrew poetry presents, we cannot but remark on the striking resemblance which there is between them. The Psalms are full of examples in which the wonderful history of the past, the ancient stories of what befel the people of God in the various manifestations of their character, are used as *παράδειγματα* to encourage and to warn the present race.

“I will incline mine ear to a parable ; Ps. xlix. 4.
I will open my dark sayings on the harp.”

“I will open my mouth in a parable : Ps. lxxviii.
2.
I will utter dark sayings of old :

Which we have heard and known,
And our fathers have told us.”

Now the entire beauty of the extant lyrics of Pindar consists, as Boeck and Dissen have shewn, in the manner in which he has applied the ancient myths of the Hellenes to the case of his heroes for warning or for praise: the difference undoubtedly being that the Hebrew Psalmist had holy truths as his materials essentially connected with the history of his people, and articles of their undoubted belief, while the Bæotian bard had merely legends which had sunk into discredit as speaking unworthily of their gods. This the poet himself acknowledges:

Olymp. i.
43. Heyne.
28, Dissen.

ἡ θαύματα πολλά.
καὶ πού τι καὶ βροτῶν φρένας
ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀληθῆ λόγον
δεδαυδαμένοι ψεύδεσι ποικίλοις
ἐξαπατῶντι μῦθοι . . .
ἔστι δ' ἀνδρὶ φάμεν
εἰκόσ' ἀμφὶ δαιμόνων κα
λά.

Wonders are doubtless manifold,
And ancient tales of things exaggerate,
Or fashioned into various forms of falsehood,
Lead mortal minds astray . . .
But surely it becomes a man
To speak no evil of the gods.

At any rate, the idea of applying truths of a religious kind to the moral instruction of mankind, seems to have taken its rise and inspiration from the new aspect, which from the time of Pythagoras such truths had taken.

The humbling view of human wisdom which distinguished Pythagoras is shared and expressed by Pindar.

τί δ' ἔλπει σοφίαν ἔμμεναι, ἧ ὀλίγον
ἀνὴρ ὑπὲρ ἀνδρὸς ἰσχύει;
οὐ γὰρ ἐσθ' ὅπως τὰ θεῶν βουλευματ' ἐρευνάσει
βροτέα φρενὶ θανατάς ἀπὸ ματρὸς ἔφν.

Fragm. x.
Dissen.

How cans't thou hope true wisdom's to be found
Wherein so little man surpasses man?
For it can never be that minds,
Of mortal woman born,
Can trace the counsels of the Deity.

Where we are reminded of the same things in Job :

But where shall wisdom be found,
And where is the place of understanding?...
Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living...
God understandeth the way thereof,
And he knoweth the place thereof.

Pindar is full of the most touching sentiments as to the vanities of human life, and the absolute dependence of all his hopes on the Deity.

ἐν δ' ὀλίγῳ
βροτῶν τὸ τερπνὸν αὖξεται· οὕτω
δὲ καὶ πιτνεῖ χαμαὶ, ἀποτρόπῳ
γνώμα σεσεισμένον.
ἐπάμεροι· τί δέ τις; τί δ' οὔτις;
σκιᾶς ὄναρ, ἄνθρωποι.

Pyth. viii.
131. Heyne

οὔτις. Dis-
sen.

Brief is the season wherein mortal pleasures grow,
Then seized by sad reverse they, shaken, fall.
Ye beings of a day! or great or mean,
What but the vision of a shade are ye!

This is also very near to Scripture language :

Job xiv. 1. "Man cometh up like a flower, and *is cut down*. He fleeth also *as a shadow*, and continueth not."

Ps. xxxix. 5. "Man at *his best estate* is altogether vanity."

But the same Being, according to Pindar, who permits the race of men in this way to learn their weakness, and teaches them by affliction, is concerned in raising them out of it :

Fragm.
Dissen.

θεῶν δὲ δυνατὸν ἐκ μελαινᾶς
νυκτὸς ἀμιάντων ὄρσαι φάος,

and

Fragm. 144.

ὅποτε θεὸς ἀνδρὶ χάρμα πέμψῃ
πρὸς μέλαιναν καρδίαν ἐστνφέλιξεν.

But God has power from out the blackest night
To call unclouded brightness forth :

Vid. Dis-
sen.

And when from *Him* the light of joy is given,
It rouses from its woe the darkened soul.

But the difference between the Theology of Pindar and that of the early Hellenes is still more striking in his doctrine of a future life :

Fragm. x.
2 Dissen.

καὶ σῶμα μὲν πάντων ἔπεται θανάτῳ περισθενεῖ
ζῶν δ' ἐτὶ λείπεται αἰῶνος εἰδῶλον· τὸ γὰρ
ἐστὶ μόνον
ἐκ θεῶν·

Though the frail body yields to conquering death,
A living form of being still survives
Immortal, as from Heaven derived.

ψυχὰὶ δ' ἀσεβέων ὑπουράνιοι
 γαῖα πωτῶνται ἐν ἄλγεσι φονίῳς
 ὑπὸ ζεύγλαις ἀφύκτοις κακῶν
 εὐσεβέων δ' ἐπουράνιοι νάοισαι
 μολπαῖς μάκαρα μέγαν ἀείδοντ' ἐν ὕμνοις.

Fragn. x.
 3.

The grovelling spirits of the unjust,
 Yoked by the bands of evil fast,
 Flit only o'er the earth in misery;
 But pious souls, who dwell on high,
 The mighty Blessed sing in sweetest strains.

It is fair to say this fragment is doubted ;
 it is given by Clem. Alex. and ascribed to
 Pindar by Theodoret, but it certainly does
 not sound Pindaric.

The following celebrated passage of his,
 however, expresses fully and eloquently the
 doctrine of Pindar on this subject; it is in
 the second Olympic ode, in which the ancient
 legend of the Happy Islands and the migra-

Olymp. II.
 101. Heyne.

εἰ δέ μιν ἔχων τις, οἶδεν τὸ μέλλον,
 ὅτι θανόντων μὲν ἐνθάδ' αὐτίκ' ἀπάλαμνοι φρένες
 ποινὰς ἔτισαν, τὰ δ' ἐν τᾷδε Διὸς ἀρχᾷ
 ἀλιτρά κατὰ γᾶς δικάζει τις ἐχθρᾷ
 λόγον φράσαις ἀνάγκη.
 ἴσον δὲ νύκτεσσιν αἰεῖ,
 ἴσα δ' ἐν ἀμέραις ἄλιον ἔχοντες ἀπονέστερον
 ἐσλοὶ δεδόρκαντι βίον. κ.τ.λ.

After speaking of the high position of one
 who retains his virtue in prosperity, he says,

Who thus is blessed, may look upon the world
 To come, that there transgressors when they die
 Their reckoning pay. When he who sits as judge
 Pronounces his irrevocable doom
 For crimes committed here. While to the good
 An immortality appears, on which
 The sun, nor night, nor day goes down.

Our object has been to cite only as much of this passage as to exhibit the doctrine of Pindar: the most brilliant part of it remains.

And it is manifest from various other fragments of Pindar that religion, in this improved view of it, was with him a constant theme, and supplied him with his highest flights of inspiration.

Passages are cited here and there by Clemens, Eusebius, and others, from the Tragic poets in which a Pythagorean tinge is visible. But the necessary task in which they were engaged of exhibiting before the people sentiments and scenes conformable to Athenian notions, made it impossible for them to depart much from the Hellenic Theology, if they would obtain a chorus, or a prize.

Plato.

Having thus exhibited the change which the Pythagorean doctrine had produced in some distinguished cases, we come now to the time of Plato and his writings. Socrates, as we have seen, as far as his knowledge went, was a kind of second Pythagoras; and there can be no doubt that he fell a martyr principally to

a doctrine which was *contraband*. But his blood, so to speak, was the seed of the doctrine for which in part he died, and the repentance which soon fell upon his countrymen produced a strong reaction in favour of his opinions, and enabled Plato, after he had by his travels enriched his stores of collected knowledge, to return to Athens and make the *Academia* almost an *institution* in his country for establishing his better opinions. The death of Socrates was the death-blow to Hellenic heathenism.

The task of Plato was that of *restoring* the Pythagorean doctrine, which had been corrupted by a crowd of philosophists, who had constructed over it a variety of physical theories. This he was enabled to do by the very important additions he had acquired from the same source out of which Pythagoras had drawn, and by which he made the *divine* element of his doctrine to bear an important proportion to the rest.

According to the Platonist Atticus, Plato Euseb. P. E. p. 511. being highly gifted and truly sent from God, *κατάπεμπτος ὡς ἀληθῶς ἐκ θεῶν*, succeeded in reducing philosophy to a system. He considered divine and human things under one aspect, but he held that human things could not be understood before the study of those which are divine, *εἰ μὴ τὰ θεῖα πρότερον ὁφθείη*. This, however, says Eusebius, had been al-

ready done to his hands in the Sacred Writings, where everything which is comprehended in true philosophy is exhibited in one harmonious system.

Plato's
later writ-
ings.

There is, as all editors have remarked, an important difference between the earlier and later productions of Plato, especially in his mode of speaking about divine subjects. The former exhibit the Pythagorean doctrine adorned by the eloquence of Plato, the latter, as we hope to shew, these same doctrines rectified and *amplified* by some access of his to the fountain of truth. That Plato had held communication, perhaps in Egypt, with learned Jews, is rendered more than probable, by the fact that we have in his later writings the Hebrew opinions as given in the Jewish *Cabala*; which appear to have contained some of their ancient traditions not distinctly appearing in their sacred books, and some of their scriptural statements, especially those of the prophets, in a form more corresponding with the less spiritual notions of the later Hebrews.

3, 24.

Of the earlier writings of Plato on divine subjects we may fairly take the *Phædon* as the type. According to Diog. Laertius it was written at *Ægina*, whither Plato had retired when he first left Athens.

The Phæ-
don.

We have seen, from the passage already cited, that his notion of the Deity was that

referred by him to Socrates, viz. that an intelligence presided over the universe who ordered everything for the best, and that none but *final* causes of this kind should be looked for in the study of nature. But this book is almost wholly occupied in discussing the nature of the soul, and the arguments for a future life.

On this subject there are many speculations, some of which rest upon the idea of transmigration as modified by Pythagoras, so as to give it a bearing on human interests. And on this he most relies.

Thus he mentions that men are born into life from a former state of existence.

ἡμεῖς αὐτὰ ταῦτα οὐκ ἐξαπατῶμενοι ὁμολογοῦμεν, *Phæd.* 72.
 ἀλλ' ἔστι τῷ ὄντι καὶ τὸ ἀναβιώσκεισθαι καὶ ἐκ τῶν^{D.}
 τεθνεώτων ψυχὰς εἶναι, καὶ ταῖς μέν γ' ἀγαθαῖς
 ἄμεινον εἶναι, ταῖς δὲ κακαῖς κάκιον.

“We are not deceived in coming to this same conclusion, that there *is* a return to life, and that the living are born from the dead, and that the souls of the dead *exist*, and that existence is better to the good, and worse to the evil.”

In accordance with this practical use of 107.
 the doctrine he says, “If death were a departure from all being, τοῦ παντός ἀπαλλαγῇ,
 it would be an unlooked for gain, ἔρμαιον, to
 the wicked who die, to be delivered at once^{ἀπροσδόκητον κέρδος. Schol.}

from the body, and from the evils of life with the soul itself. Whereas, inasmuch as the soul is manifestly immortal, there would be for it no other deliverance from evils nor salvation, except by becoming as good and wise as possible. For the soul takes nothing else with it to Hades, but its training and its education, *παιδείας τε καὶ τροφῆς*, which, it is reported, *λέγεται*, are most highly beneficial or injurious to it, at its first entrance thither."

He then gives a mythic account of the different paths in which the dead are taken, and their different treatment. To this he attaches another, what he calls, beautiful myth, in which among other things he describes the upper regions, in accordance with the Hellenic notions of the happy islands: *καὶ δὴ καὶ θεῶν ἔδη τε καὶ ἱερὰ αὐτοῖς εἶναι, ἐν οἷς τῷ ὄντι οἰκητὰς θεοὺς εἶναι, καὶ φήμας τε καὶ μαντείας καὶ αἰσθήσεις τῶν θεῶν...*

"And then they who dwell there have buildings and temples of the gods, in which the gods are real inhabitants, and where there are responses, and oracles, and manifestations of the gods."

All this indicates a far lower state of instruction on divine subjects than will be found in the later works of Plato. And though Socrates is made to speak strongly as to his hope of a future life, there are in the dialogue

repeated confessions of the insufficiency of the grounds of such a hope.

"It appears to me," says Simmias, "as it probably does to you, that to have a clear knowledge of such things in the present life is either impossible or extremely difficult.... That we ought respecting such things to take decidedly one of these two courses, either to learn from others, or to discover for ourselves, how the matter stands; or, if this is impossible, to receive the best and most unobjectionable of human accounts we can, and risking ourselves on this as on a raft, to sail through life, unless one could make the voyage more firmly and safely by the use of a vehicle less frail, or of some *account that is divine*, ἡ λόγου θείου¹." And Socrates closes his discourse with remarks to a similar effect, as to the conclusiveness of his theory, τὸ μὲν οὖν ταῦτα δύσχυρίσασθαι οὕτως ἔχειν, ὥς ἐγὼ διελέλυθα, οὐ πρόπει νοῦν ἔχοντι ἀνδρί. His reliance being on the faith of the soul's continuance, which is in fact inherent in the human mind.

We come then to that remarkable series of the writings of Plato which are acknowledged, on all hands, to have been composed at the latter part of his life, when his own

Confession
of the need
of some
θεῖος λό-
γος.

Plato's
later writ-
ings.

¹ i. e. manifestly, by using some foundation of our belief less frail than the best account which human reasoning affords, the particle ἡ may be *exegetical*.

education had been completed, and when he was engaged in the serious business in the Academia, and elsewhere, of imparting his philosophical knowledge to others.

Of these the *Timæus* is the most celebrated, both on account of its profound and difficult speculations, and the accordance of its statements with the Hebrew Scriptures. But we shall examine the series in the order in which the pieces appear to have been written, v iz. the Republic, the *Timæus*, and the Laws.

Politia.

The *Politia* of Plato was written with great care ; three copies of the exordium were found after his death, written by his own hand.

Diog. L.
iii. 37.

The first, and part of the second book, is occupied in establishing the nature of *justice*, from which Plato is led to the subject of civil government. And at the foundation of this he places religion, which he carefully distinguishes from the opinions of his time.

Polit. p.
377, u.

He says, "Do you not perceive that the *commencement* of every undertaking is the most important—(ἀρχή, the principle on which we set about it)—especially with the young and susceptible, for then that impression—τύπος—is most easily made and received which we most desire to imprint upon a character. Shall we therefore allow children to listen to fables of *any* kind which may be met

with, and thus allow them to receive opinions the reverse of those we wish them to have when they are grown up?... We must therefore, in the first place, select from such productions those that are good, and then prevail upon their nurses and mothers to repeat to them these myths, and to give much more attention to forming their minds by these, than to the management of their bodies by their hands. But very many of those which they now tell them must be cast aside."

Religious poetry to be the means of laying the foundation of obedience to civil government.

Of these Plato mentions more particularly those of Homer and Hesiod, which put the gods in an unworthy light.

"The impressions they receive at such an age are firmly fixed in their minds. We should therefore by all means endeavour that the things they first hear should be most adapted to the promotion of virtue."

378, E.

We have before remarked on the exact correspondence of this with the method required by the Hebrew legislator for instilling the principles of religious truth into the minds of Hebrew youth.

It was so in the case of the Hebrews.

"What then, it is asked, are to be the models for your religious instruction?—*οἱ τύποι περὶ θεολογίας τίνες ἂν εἶεν*.—They must be of this kind: God is always to be represented such as He is.... Is not God then essentially good, and must He not be represented so?...

And as a Being who is good is the author of no real evil, and is essentially beneficent, so God is *the cause*¹ only of that which is good. . . For we experience much more evil than good,—but none other than God must be represented as the cause of our blessings,—but of the evils which befall us we must seek for some other cause, and not God.”

379, α.

“If,” he continues, “the hero of a tale is said to be in afflictions, we must either not allow these to be ascribed to the Deity, or we must seek the principles of his conduct, and say that the conduct of God was just and good, but that they were chastised for their own benefit.”

380, β.

“And we must not allow a poet to say that they who are thus chastised are *miserable*—*ἀθλοῖ*—if God is represented as the author of it; but he may be allowed to say that the wicked, as needing chastisement, become wretched, and that they were benefited by the punishment which God inflicted.”

This is just what a poet *had* said :

Ps. cvii. 17.

Fools because of their transgression, and
because of their iniquities, are afflicted.
Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat,
And they draw near unto the gates of death.

¹ *αἴτιον*—*i. e.* to whom the credit or discredit of a thing is due—this is consistent with the permission of evil, but evil is not the *object* of God.

Then they cry unto the Lord in their
trouble,

And He saveth them out of all their dis-
tresses....

O! that men would praise the Lord for
his goodness,

And for his wonderful works to the chil-
dren of men."

The next point in which the representa-
tions of God are to be watched over, is that
which relates to the *truthfulness* of His cha-
racter. There is not only to be the Urim, but
the Thummim; not only the light of good-
ness, but the integrity of truth, in all which is
ascribed to God; if, as Plato says, "our
guardians are to be pious and divine persons
—εἰ μέλλουσιν ἡμῖν οἱ φύλακες θεοσεβεῖς τὲ καὶ
θεῷι γίγνεσθαι."

"There are some cases," says Plato "in
which a departure from exact truth is allow-
able *in men*, as towards enemies, and the in-
sane, or in mythological statements when we
do not know how the fact is about what is
ancient—ἐν ταῖς μυθολογίαις¹ διὰ τὸ μὴ εἶδέναι ὅπῃ
τὰ ληθεῖς ἔχει περὶ τῶν παλαιῶν—but on none of^{382, D.}
these accounts is it necessary with God. The

¹ It is manifest that Plato means by a *μῦθος* here, not a
kind of parable conveying a philosophical idea, but a narra-
tive which approaches to truth as nearly as that truth is
known—and which is, as we say, founded in fact; and it is at
any rate very seldom that he uses the word in any other sense.

divine nature, therefore, is altogether free from what is false. God is perfectly simple and true, both in word and deed; nor is He change-ful, nor does He deceive others." *πάντη ἄρα ἀψευδὲς τὸ δαιμόνιον τε καὶ τὸ θεῖον. κομδῆ ἄρα ὁ θεὸς ἀπλοῦν καὶ ἀληθὲς ἐν τε ἔργῳ καὶ ἐν λόγῳ, οὔτε αὐτὸς μεθίσταται οὔτε ἄλλους ἐξαπατᾷ.*

It is certainly remarkable that Plato, in laying down the principle on which poets are to construct the songs which are to be in every one's mouth, as far as these relate to the moral attributes of God, has fixed on those two which are so constantly put together in the Psalms of David. We may remark, too, that the word *ἀπλοῦς* is one of those by which the Hebrew *דל* is rendered by the LXX.

In the opening of the third book Plato expresses himself strongly against the established mode of speaking about the state of the dead, in which it is represented as a phantom-scene of horrors; for such representations have an evil influence on the character of men.

415, A. But we have in this book the mention of a Phœnician fable. The scholiast says it refers to the story of "Cadmus and the Dragon's Teeth." If so, Plato has taken such liberties with the fable as that it is extremely difficult to recognise the one from the other,

This fable, according to Plato, was *a dream* (p. 443). He tells it with extreme hesitation, as to a people among whom the idea of *liberty and equality* would make it most unpalatable, taking care to say, that from the nature of the dream itself the members of a state *were all brethren*.

The gist of it is this, "God in forming the ^{415, c.} elements of it, mingled *gold* in the formation of those who were qualified *to bear rule*, wherefore they are *more honourable*. Those who were to assist in the government He mixed with *silver*, and those who were to labour, with *iron* and *brass*,...and that the oracle declared that the *state should perish* when the iron or the brass took the management of the state." Now with all deference to the scholiast, there is a parable, a *μῦθος*, and that a *dream*, which the Greeks would have called Phœnician, in which, to say the least, there is a much closer resemblance to the idea of Plato than to the *Spartan* fable, the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, "Thou, O ^{Dan. ii. 31.} king, sawest and behold a great image. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and

clay, and brake them to pieces." In this dream the idea of Plato is as nearly as possible satisfied. The different materials are ἀδελφοί, as being members of the same body. The *head* is of gold, the higher members of silver, the lower of brass, iron and clay, and it was to be on the iron and clay that *destruction* was to fall, *according to the oracle*.

588, B. We shall mention in connexion with this another *possible* adaptation of the same kind, in the ninth book of the Republic, where Plato proposes to exhibit an image, not of the state, but of the *soul of man*.

"Let us form an image of the soul *like those natures which are anciently represented in fable*—τῶν τοιούτων τινα, οἶαι μυθολογοῦνται παλαιὰ γενέσθαι φύσεις. Let us form the figure of a creature various and many-headed, with heads around it of tame and wild animals; let there be another figure of a lion, and another of a man: let them be united together so as to form one, and to have the appearance of a man."

1. 5—10. Now an image somewhat resembling this is found in *Ezekiel*: "There came the likeness of four living creatures, and this was their appearance, they had the likeness of a man." "As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side; and the face of an ox on

the left side, and the face of an eagle." Plato has probably taken his idea from this figure, though he has amplified it and applied it to his own purpose; and this will be the more likely if it appear that he has taken another piece of imagery from the same chapter of Ezekiel. Both the Prophet and Plato have united the lion and the man in one living creature; where, however, the moral of Plato is, that reason and power are to unite to subdue the passions, or make them subservient to the purposes of a well-ordered character: *ὡς ἄμεινον ὄν παντὶ ὑπὸ θείου καὶ φρονίμου ἀρχεσθαι, μάλιστα μὲν οἰκεῖον ἔχοντες ἐν αὐτῷ, εἰ δὲ μὴ, ἔξωθεν ἐφ'esτώτος*¹.

The other passage to which we refer is in the Tenth Book. He had been speaking of the rewards which a good man receives in this life from gods and men. "But these," says he, "are nothing compared with those ^{614, a.} which await him after death." In order to exhibit these, he tells a story of one who died, had a *vision* of the other world, and returned to life again. "He came to a wonderful ^{614, c.}

¹ Stallbaum exults over this passage. He says: "Let the *haters of our reason* read this passage over and over again, if indeed they are *willing to hear or able to understand* a Greek philosopher who had not received the light of the Christian religion." It is easy to see that the good man is very angry with somebody for not allowing the *omnia posse* to the human intellect.

616, c.

place,...where the judges had taken their seat; when they had passed sentence they commanded the just to go to the right hand upward through the heaven, having *fitted marks on the front of those who had been judged*—but the unjust they commanded downwards to the left.” He then describes a vision of this kind: “A place whence they perceived from above through the whole heaven and earth, a light like a column, much *like the rainbow*, but more bright and pure. That the distaff of necessity was seen, on which was a whirl, consisting of eight hemispheres, that the *rims* of these spheres were variegated in different kinds and degrees of brightness.” This is allowed to be a representation of the eight starry spheres.

v. 26.

Now we have in Ezekiel visions, to say the least, very similar. The *mode of marking* the different characters is entirely Eastern. In Ezekiel ix. 13, it is said, “The glory of the God of Israel was gone up to the threshold of the house: and he called to the man who had the inkhorn by his side, and said,—Set a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh for the abominations done.” But in chap. i: “Above the firmament was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was as the appearance of a man above upon it.”

“As the appearance of the *bow that is in the cloud* in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about.” v. 28.

We have also the appearance of circles or wheels. v. 16.

“The appearance of the wheels and their working—motion—was as it were a wheel within a wheel. As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes.” The same vision of the firmament and the spheres, is connected in ch. ix. with the process of judgment referred to above. Now whatever was the real interpretation of this passage in Ezekiel, the Jews, it appears, referred it partly to the heavenly spheres. Grotius says, “Moses Maimonides, in *duce dubitantium*, ea quæ hic sunt partim ad angelos refert motores sphaerarum, partim ad ipsas sphaeras, id est primum mobile, planetarum quinque, solis et lunæ, deinde sublunarium.” And it is likely that Plato would have access rather to the *Cabala*, and commentaries of the Jews, which were more adapted to his use, than to the letter of the Hebrew Scriptures. On Ez. i. 4.

There is another passage, which has been quoted in connexion with the sufferings and death of our Saviour, and which it is certainly not easy to see how Plato could have devised except from the suggestion of the Grot. on Matt.

p. 361. Hebrew Scriptures. In the 2nd Book of the Republic, referring to the trials to which the *constancy* of virtue would be subjected, he says, of the truly virtuous man, "Let him be constant unto death, though when really upright he should appear through life the opposite....

"The advocates of genuine goodness say, that such a man will be *scourged*, will be tortured, will be bound, will be blinded, and at last will be empaled," ἀνασκινδυλευθήσεται.

This passage was before the mind of Cicero in a fragment of his Republic given by Lactantius. "Quære," says he, "si duo sint quorum alter optimus vir, æquissimus summa justitia, singulari fide; alter insigni scelere et audacia existimetur; et si in eo sit errore civitas ut bonum illum virum, sceleratum, facinorosum, nefarium putet: contra autem, qui sit improbissimus summa esse probitate existimet, proque hac opinione omnium civium, bonus ille vir vexetur, rapiatur manus ei denique afferantur, effodiantur oculi, damnetur, vinciat, exterminetur."

Isaiah liii.
2-8.

This does not look like a mere imaginary case, but may well have been suggested by the words of the Prophet as to the suffering Messiah: "My servant is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief...Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, yet we did

esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted ...

“He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter....He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living.” The Jewish commentaries on this passage, though some of them referred it to their Messiah, more commonly interpreted it of the sufferings of one of their prophets, or moralized generally upon it, and applied it as Plato has done.

The Timæus of Plato is supposed to contain his most matured opinions on the subject of the Divine nature, and the history of the creation; and here his account becomes exceedingly consistent with the Scripture narrative.

The *Timæus* of Plato.

It is arranged that *Timæus* should give an account of the universe, beginning from the creation of the world, and ending with the nature of man; and then that *Critias* should form of these primæval men an imaginary state.

p. 27.

Timæus begins by distinguishing the spiritual from the external: “τί τὸ ὄν αἰεὶ γένηται δὲ οὐχ ἔχον, καὶ τί τὸ γιγνόμενον αἰεὶ, ὃν δὲ οὐδέποτε. τὸ μὲν δὴ νοήσει μετὰ λόγου περιληπτὸν αἰεὶ κατὰ ταῦτ’ ὄν, τὸ δ’ αὖ δόξῃ μετ’ αἰσθήσεως ἀλόγου

27, D.

δοξαστὸν, γιγνόμενον καὶ ἀπολλύμενον, ὥτως δὲ οὐδέποτε ὄν.”

“We must consider what that is which always exists, but has no origin, and what that is which is always coming into being, but which never (essentially) exists. The former being apprehended by thought and reflexion, as being *constant*¹, the latter being judged of by impression conveyed by perception without reasoning, as coming into being, and departing from it, but never essentially existing.”

28, A. “Everything then which comes into being, necessarily does so by *some cause*; for it is utterly impossible that anything should begin to be without a cause.”

28, B. “Let this universe then be called heaven, or the world, or by any other name which it usually receives.”

Cicero's translation. “This must necessarily have begun to be from some cause, ‘inasmuch as it is perceived, and touched, and everywhere corporeal.’”

28, C. “But to *find out the Creator and Father* of this universe is a difficult task—*εὐρεῖν τε ἔργον*—and when discovered, it is impossible to speak of Him (adequately) to mankind at large.

¹ So it seems convenient to render the oft-recurring phrase αἰὲ κατὰ ταῦτα, as that which has no changing relations, to speak mathematically.

“Canst thou by searching find out God?” Job xi. 7.

“If then this world is beautiful and its Creator *good*, it is manifest He made the eternal and immutable His pattern; for this is the most beautiful of created things, He the most excellent of causes.” 29, A.

“And if, when many persons have said many things respecting the gods and the rise of the universe, we should be unable to make these accounts agree, and to give them as accurate, you must not wonder; but if we give an account which is as probable as any, you must be satisfied, remembering that I who speak, and you who hear, are partakers of human nature; so that *having had handed down to us the tradition which is near the truth*, we ought to inquire no further,—ὥστε περὶ τούτων τὸν εἰκότα μῦθον ἀποδεχομένους, πρέπει τούτου μηδὲν ἔτι ζητεῖν.” 29, C.

We can hardly imagine anything can be more clear from this statement, which Socrates pronounces to be *ἄριστα*, than that the speaker has some traditionary account before him with which he is satisfied as compared with the various theories prevalent; or anything more *opposite* to that absurd confidence in unaided human *reason*, which modern philosophy displays, and seems intent upon ascribing to these much-injured Greek inquirers.

“Let us consider then for what reason He 30, A.

who formed the universe was led to do so. He was *benevolent*—and to a benevolent Being there is no approach to grudging in His deeds. And thus everything which it was His will should come into being, as much as possible resembled Himself.”

“Whoever, therefore, receives (as true) from the account of wise men—*παρ’ ἀνδρῶν φρονίμων ἀποδεχόμενος*—this ruling principle of creation and of the world (viz. God’s benevolence), will do so with perfect correctness.”

“Now the Deity desiring that all things should be good and without imperfection, perceiving that everything which was in sight—*πάν ὅσον ἦν ὁρατόν*—was agitated without harmony and order, reduced it from that state into an order consistent with His view of what was best.”

37, D. The speaker now deserts his tradition for awhile, and enters into some speculations about it like those with which the Pythagoreans *confounded* the simple doctrines of their master. This then is philosophy, and Plato, or whoever invented it, is welcome to it. We come again to his *tradition*.

37, E. “When the creating Parent beheld this *ἄγαλμα* of the immortal gods in living motion, He was *gratified*. And in His complacency considered how He might make it still more conformable to his plan.”

Even Stallbaum refers to Gen. i. 31: "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good."

"Hence God resolved to form a kind of moving image of eternity. Moreover, days and nights, and months and years, which did not exist before the heaven was formed, He brought into being in connexion with it,—and that *time* might come into being, the sun and moon, and the five stars, called planets, were produced for the distinction and preservation of the calculations of time,—*εἰς διορισμὸν καὶ φυλακὴν ἀριθμῶν χρόνου.*"

"And God said, Let there be lights in the Gen. i. 14. firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years." These orbs, according to Timæus, are *living deities*; and the creating Parent addressing them as His sons, assures them of an immortality not inherent in their own nature, but depending on the unchangeable will of God. Addressing Himself to these, He tells them that three classes of mortals remain to be created, and unless these are produced the 41. universe will be imperfect. And it is observable, that in the Mosaic narrative the Creator, when about to bring man into being, *speaks as though addressing others*: "And God said, *Let us make man* in our own image."

But Plato has made the Deity delegate this task to these created gods. It seems likely that Plato had mixed the *doctrine of angels*, which is found in scripture, but on which the Jews of Plato's time were fond of speculating *in connexion with the planets*, with his notions of these created gods.

Next to gods, *i. e.* the planetary gods, according to the system of Plato as given here, are the δαίμονες, which in almost all traditions respecting them correspond to the angels and their supposed descendants, the inhabitants of the old world. In scripture language they appear under the names of the *Sons of God*, and γίγαντες; and by their great longevity, as stated there, might well be reckoned in traditionary accounts to be more than human.

40, E.

Of them Plato says: "Respecting the other divinities, *the dæmons*, it surpasses our power to tell or to know, but we must believe those who have spoken of them in former times, the descendants of gods, who well knew what related to their own ancestors. It is impossible we should discredit the sons of gods, even though their affirmation is not attended with probable or necessary proofs." And then he gives a few of the names given in the Theogonia of Hesiod. And with this brief mention of them concludes that subject. For though Plato has introduced to his coun-

trymen a theology entirely new, he seems to have thought it desirable to pay this passing compliment to the old Hellenic system.

But of the true race of men Plato speaks as of a *fallen and falling race*.

“The Creator informs those subordinate δημιουργοι, whose duty it was to carry out his plans for the formation of other natures, that 42. among these would be produced that living being which is the most adapted of all for religious worship, ζώων τὸ θεοσεβέστατος. And that the human nature being of two kinds, the superior would be that which afterwards would be called *man*. But of this race those who 42, B. kept in subjection their animal nature, after living well the appointed time, would return each to the habitation of his associate star, and spend a blessed and congenial existence. But failing this he would be changed *in his second generation* into the nature of a *woman*; and if in this case he should continue to do evil, his soul would be changed into the nature of some brute, according to the nature of his wickedness.”

“And having made these arrangements the 42, E. Creator returned to his own habitual repose.”

There is obviously much in this account to confirm the theory of Faber, that the original notion of transmigration was a kind of mythical representation of the *fall of man*.

Plato has *at least here* adopted this myth, *in connexion*, however, as it would seem, with some form of the Mosaic account. The creation of the woman *was* the second human creation, and the woman was the first in that transgression by which human nature fell. Among
 Gen. v. 24. the descendants of Adam *one* is expressly mentioned as having been *translated* to what Plato calls the habitation of his associate star. And in the Mosaic account God is expressly spoken of as resting from his work of creation.

Vol. i. Introduct. The *Leges* of Plato appear to have been written in advanced life. Stallbaum says, "the latter days of Plato were not passed in merely correcting and polishing his former writings ; but, doubtless, in his old age he produced new fruits of his genius. In carefully comparing the works of Plato, it has always appeared to me that his book, *de Legibus*, not only savours of the old man, but tends to confirm the account of those who say, that after he had a third time returned to his own country, he relaxed in his ideal speculations, and directed his thoughts to the study of actual human life. So that, as he had formed an ideal Republic, he felt it his duty, in the decline of life, to direct the attention of his countrymen to views of government which might be put into practice, and thus

exhibited a system of laws which were applicable to real use."

If this be so, the book *de Legibus* presents an interesting view of the attitude of Plato's mind in his latter days. For in this work all that he had said before on those subjects, which connect the conduct of man with the nature and government of God, is freed from much that was phantastic, and uttered in a tone more like conviction.

It is a discourse between a Cretan, a Lacedæmonian, and an Athenian: both Crete and Sparta having been celebrated for the excellence of their ancient institutions.

The conversation opens with an acknowledgement that all sound legislation must be regarded as of Divine origin.

"Was it a god or some human being who undertook the institution of your laws?" "A god," says the Cretan, "as must in all justice be said. Among us it was Zeus. Among the Lacedæmonians, I believe, they say it was Apollo."

It appears more clearly even than before, in this discourse, that Plato had a kind of *Theocracy* before him, *i.e.* a republic whose institutions were in all their main principles divine in their origin, and whose most strenuous efforts were to be employed in instilling such sentiments into the minds of people of

all ages, but especially of the youth, as were conformable to the government not only of men, but of a holy and righteous God.

712. "In forming our laws," says he, "let us call in the aid of God for the construction of our state, and may He hear us, and hearing us propitiously, come to our aid, in ordering our state, and in the formation of our laws."

713. "If our state should name for itself—*ἐπονομάζεσθαι*—a supreme ruler, it behoves us to mention the name of *that God who rules supreme* over all who are endowed with understanding."

Ps. cxi. 10. "The fear of the Lord is the *primitiæ* of wisdom.

A good understanding have all they that do His commandments."

A mere *democracy* is, in fact, by this time as far as possible from the thoughts of Plato. He manifestly feels the necessity either of some sovereign human authority in a state, or, if this cannot be had without danger of wrong and violence on the part of the ruler, then of such a recognition and *prevalence* of the government and laws of a superior Being as should be a substitute for such authority.

Plato had seen the ruin which had befallen his country by a rampant democracy; he had experienced the oppression of absolute government at the court of Dionysius; it was

therefore natural that he should cast his eyes, for his *ideal* of a government on an existing theocratic commonwealth, whose *institutions*, at least, exhibit a pattern of divine perfection.

In a passage to which reference has already been made, he employs, to illustrate his views, *his own version* of the ancient myth of Saturn.

“Saturn,” says he, “knowing that no ^{713, B.} *human* nature was able, if entrusted with absolute power, to manage human affairs without violence and wrong, placed as chiefs and monarchs over our states not human beings,—just as we place over the lower animals not brutes but human beings for rulers,—but demons of a more divine and excellent race; and this account conveys the truth—λέγει δὴ καὶ νῦν οὗτος ὁ λόγος ἀληθεία χρώμενος—which is applicable now. For whatever state some mortal directs—ἄρχη—and not God, it is impossible for it to escape evils and sufferings:” (*i. e.* wherever a human will is the ἀρχή, the foundation of government).

“It becomes us, therefore, by all means to imitate this state of things, and whatever principle there is among us partaking of immortality—ὅσον ἐν ἡμῖν ἀθανασίας ἔνεστι—that we should in obedience to that, both as a state and as individuals, regulate our affairs, and denominate that *law* which holds supreme dominion over the mind.”

The recommendation to which we have referred, in speaking of the Politia, according to which the state is to provide that the principles of moral government are to be instilled into the minds of the young, is still more strongly urged in the Laws.

660, A.

He says, "This is the third or fourth time I have been led to the remark, that discipline is the attraction and conduct—ὁλκή τε καὶ ἀγωγή—of the young to that mode of life which law pronounces right, and is approved as such by the experience of a well-regulated mind. In order then that the soul of the youth may habitually have its associations of pleasure or pain connected with what law and experience ordain or disapprove, a prudent legislator will endeavour by all means to provide that the poets should exhibit such characters as may serve for examples, by means of those songs which we call *odes*, but which in truth have become *incantations* to the soul—ὥντως μὲν ἐπωδαὶ ταῖς ψυχαῖς αὐταὶ νῦν γεγονέναι—and which shall be carefully adapted to render the pleasures and dislikes of men conformable to the ordinances of law."

In order to this he requires that such *odes* should put the providence of God, connected with human life, in a true light.

"You must compel your poets to say, that the good man is fortunate and happy by being

prudent and just,—ὡς ὁ μὲν ἀγαθὸς ἀνὴρ σώφρων
 ὢν καὶ δίκαιος εὐδαίμων ἐστὶ καὶ μακάριος—whatever
 his outward form or fortune may be, and to
 discourse of what is good *in itself*. For the
 things which are called good by men in
 general are not necessarily so. Health,
 beauty, riches, the perfect use of the senses,
 the possession of absolute power, and, as the
 sum of all happiness, that the possessor of all
 these should become immortal. Whereas,”
 says he, “you and I perceive that to the good
 man these things might be blessings, while to
 the wicked they would be the reverse. For
 that a man without virtue would be better
 deprived of all these, and to him immortality
 would be a *curse*.”

Vid. But-
 ler's Ser-
 mons, pref.
 p. ix.

And, returning to the necessity of imbuing
 the minds of all with these principles, he says :

“We are agreed, then, that every man ^{665.}
 and boy, that every person, whether free or
 bond, whether male or female, and the uni-
 versal state, should never cease celebrating
 in their songs those ordinances which we have
 laid down, maintaining, however, such con-
 tinual variety as shall keep up the interest
 of those who are to sing these hymns.”

In the Third Book Plato gives a conjec-
 tural account of the rise of states, founded on
 tradition.

He says that multitudes of states have, ^{677, A.}

from various causes, come to destruction; and, in speaking of these causes, the question is asked: "Do you think there is any truth in those ancient accounts of these things?—*ἀρ' οὖν ὑμῖν οἱ παλαιοὶ λόγοι ἀλήθειαν ἔχειν τινὰ δοκούσιν;*"

What accounts?

"In which we are told that many devastations of mankind have taken place by floods, pestilence, and so forth, in which the race has been almost destroyed."

"There is all possible credit to be attached to such a statement. Let us, then," says he, "consider that great desolation which once took place by the deluge—*τὴν τῷ κατακλυσμῷ ποτὲ γενομένην.*"

He then goes on to describe how those who escaped from this deluge took refuge in mountainous regions, whence, after a time, they descended to the plain, and long continued in the exercise of that kindliness and simplicity of character which their circumstances tended to produce and foster.

679.

"And, on account of this simplicity,—*διὰ τὴν εὐήθειαν*,—the things which they heard represented as honourable or base, they believed to be undoubtedly so. For no one, on account of his *wisdom*, as is now the case, suspected some falsehood was beneath, but believing—*νομίζοντες*—that the things which were told

them both respecting gods and men were true, they directed their lives accordingly." The nature of *moral ignorance* as stated by Plato here, remarkably accords with what is found constantly in Scripture.

He says, "You may consider me in earnest or not, as you please, but I am convinced that the destruction of kings and of that entire way of thinking—*διανοήματος*—(*i. e.* attachment to monarchy)—arose purely from general depravity, and especially from ignorance of the best interests of mankind...."

"I repeat," says he, "that it was this height of ignorance,—*τὴν μεγίστην ἀμαθίαν*—which overthrew that form of government, and which is naturally calculated to produce a similar effect at present. This evil therefore must be remedied."

"This height of ignorance consists in this, That what is known to be honourable and good is hated, and what is known to be the reverse is preferred and practised."

In the Fourth Book Plato fixes on an imaginary locality for his state, the principal features of which are to be: That the part occupied by the community should be distant about 80 stadia from the sea—that there should be access to commodious harbours—that its land should bear most sorts of productions—that no state should be very near

it. For the place had been made desolate by a former expulsion of the inhabitants. And it should be rugged and wooded rather than champagne.

716.

Having then conducted his colony to the place selected, he gives them a solemn address, as to the all-prevalent power and righteous judgment of God.

“ἦκοντας μὲν καὶ παρόντας θῶμεν τοὺς ἐποίκους, τὸν δ' ἐξῆς αὐτοῖς διαπεραντέον ἂν εἴη λόγον.”

“Let us suppose the colonists arrived and before us, the following address must then be made to them.

“God¹, as the ancient tradition says,—ὥσπερ καὶ ὁ παλαιὸς λόγος—occupies the beginning, the middle, and the end of all things, and going about his purposes naturally accomplishes them straightway—εὐθείᾳ περαίνει—on him justice continually waits, inflicting punishment on those who depart from the divine law; and he who hopes for happiness is continually observant of this with a lowly and well-ordered mind—ταπεινὸς καὶ κεκοσμημένος. But whoever, puffed up by pride, is self-sufficient, and rejects this rule and guidance, is utterly deserted by God; and though he may continue for a while to flatter himself and to

¹ Aristotle, or whoever wrote the ancient piece ascribed to him, *De Mundo*, c. 7, has cited this passage with admiration: ὁ Θεὸς καθάπερ ὁ γενναῖος Πλάτων φησὶν, κ. τ. λ.

receive the adulation of others, he is ere long visited by the righteous judgment of God, and involves himself and those about him in destruction."

"The conduct," he continues, "which would ⁷¹⁷ be acceptable to God, φίλη καὶ ἀκόλουθος Θεῷ—would be—That God should be *our measure* in all things—ὁ δὲ Θεὸς ἡμῶν παντῶν χρημάτων μέτρον ἂν εἴη μάλιστα—far more than any human being can be said to be. He therefore who desires to have the friendship of such a Being, must endeavour by all means to become *like Him*...But let us consider that in pursuance of this course the noblest and truest of all, as I believe, the following duties must be attended to."

Plato has laid down the principle of seeking the love and friendship of God as the *first* fundamental duty of life. In speaking of the other duties, whether greater or smaller, he has constantly launched out into a long discourse in which we certainly are reminded of the "*old man eloquent*," for which he is found ^{Senec. Ep. 94.} fault with by Seneca: "Legem enim brevem esse oportet," says he, "quo facilius ab imperitis teneatur, ut velut *emissa divinitus* vox sit. Jubeat, non disputet. Nihil mihi videtur frigidius, nihil ineptius quam lex cum prologo." One cannot read the Laws of Plato without feeling there is *some* truth in this,

and being reminded by contrast of the legislation of Moses. At the same time the Hebrew legislator has set an example, which Plato has imitated after the fashion of a Greek. And we may remark, with all his eloquence on moral subjects Seneca was essentially a *Roman*. Aristotle has given a long critique of Plato's laws, but has not found *this* fault with them.

Having nobly discoursed on the love of God as the foundation of obedience, and, as in duty bound, not omitted the respect due to inferior deities, Plato goes on to speak of the great importance of a dutiful regard to parents.

717. After these duties is the honour to be paid to surviving parents—γονεῶν δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα τίμαι ζώντων. As it is a sacred duty—θέμις—to repay obligations which are the first and greatest of all, the longest standing of all our debts.... "For," says he, "Nemesis, the angel of justice, is appointed to watch over the performance of this duty."

718. "If we observe these things, and each of us constantly lives in accordance with them, we shall obtain our reward from the gods and our superiors in spending the best part of our life in good hopes—ἐν ἐλπίσιν ἀγαθαῖς διάγοντες τὸ πλεῖστον τοῦ βίου."

After having thus given, so to speak, the

duties of the first table, and dwelt upon them with much philosophy, Plato mentions those of the *second table*. He says not in so many words, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," but what he does say amounts to the same thing.

He says, "The greatest of all evils among ^{732.} men in general is inherent in their souls, and by always excusing which they have no contrivance to avoid it. And this is the common opinion—*τοῦτο δ' ἔστιν ὃ λέγουσιν*—that every man is naturally a lover of himself, and that it is right he should be so. Whereas, in truth, of all his errors—*ἀμαρτημάτων*—there is none for which he incurs more blame than in the excessive love of himself. For the lover is blinded by the object of his passion, so as to form wrong judgments of what is right and good and honourable....Therefore it is the duty of every man to escape from excessive love of self—*διὸ πάντα ἄνθρωπον χρὴ φεύγειν τὸ σφόδρα φιλεῖν αὐτόν.*"

Of his remarks *on virtue* there is one which deserves mention here. He says,

"All the gold which is on the earth, or ^{728.} under the earth, is not to be compared with virtue—*πᾶς ὁ τ' ἐπὶ γῆς καὶ ὑπὸ γῆς χρυσὸς ἀρετῆς οὐκ ἀντάξιος.*"

"And all the things which thou mayest ^{Prov. Sol.} desire are not to be compared unto her."

After mentioning various arrangements for settling his people in the land, he says,

745.

"It will then be necessary that the city should be built as nearly as may be in the centre of the country. And then that there should be a division of the country into *twelve parts*, reserving first a portion to be consecrated to *Hestia*, and *Zeus*, and *Athene*, to be called the Acropolis, and surrounded by a circle, from which these twelve divisions are to begin....The distribution of these divisions is to take place by lot."

"The population is then to be divided into twelve portions....And twelve lots being cast to twelve gods—*δώδεκα θεοῖς δώδεκα κλήρους θέντας*—the lot which falls to each god should be named and dedicated to him; and that this should be called a *tribe*¹—*καὶ φυλὴν αὐτὴν ἐπονομάσαι* (*i. e.* the legislator)."

778.

"The citadel is to be erected in an elevated situation, both for security and for healthiness. Temples to the gods are to be

¹ *i. e.* Twelve lots corresponding with the twelve divisions of the *people*, were to be appointed for twelve gods, and each division thus allotted to the god, and called a tribe, was to bear the name of that god. Plato might refer to the twelve *olympic* deities, but he does not use the article here, and the notions prevalent in and out of Palestine in Plato's time respecting the twelve founders of the Jewish republic, make it at least probable that these were before the mind of Plato. They would answer to the heroes *ἐπώνυμοι* of the Attic *φυλαί*. Hence *φυλὴν ἐπονομάσαι*.

erected round the market-place, together with courts of law and justice, in which homicides and other grave offences were to be judged."

Of the particular laws Plato leaves the regulations of trade and commerce to the future occasions which might give rise to them; and proposes to legislate for the people especially as occupiers of the lands. Some of these are worth notice.

Capital
causes tried
at Jerusa-
lem in
Plato's
time.

"Let no one move his neighbour's land-⁸⁴³
mark—*μη κινείτω γῆς ὅρια μηδεὶς γείτονος*."

"If a traveller in his journey is passing⁸⁴⁷
through a farm, either alone or with a com-
panion, he may eat the fruit without payment."

"Let not our citizens possess a native Greek⁸⁵⁷
as a slave. If a theft be committed, great or
small, let there be one sentence and one punish-
ment of the offender. He must in the first
place restore the double of what he has
stolen, or if he cannot do that he must be
bound till he obtains forgiveness of the injured
party."

"If any one catches a thief breaking into⁸⁷⁴
his house by night and kill him let him be
free—*καθαρὸς*—or if he kill a highwayman in
defending himself."

"If a beast of burden or any other animal⁸⁷⁵
cause the death of a man, and the next of kin
inquire into the matter, let the judges ap-
pointed for this purpose decide, and let the

beast be killed and cast out of the boundaries of the country."

866. "If any one kill a free person unwittingly, he must undergo the appointed purifications. But let him not be unmindful of *one of the ancient legends*, according to which, the man who has met with a violent death haunts the author of it, if he remains in the neighbourhood. Wherefore it is necessary that the manslayer should withdraw for the space of a whole year, and be an exile from that entire neighbourhood."

"But if he refuse to do this, the next of kin to the person killed must prosecute him, and double satisfaction must be made—διπλὰ δὲ πάντα τὰ τιμωρήματα."

874. "If one be found dead, and it be not known who killed him, the next of kin shall inform the magistrates, and the unknown homicide shall be proclaimed an outlaw."

"If one violates the person of a free woman he may be killed with impunity."

878. "If one in anger wounds another, and the wound be found curable, let him pay a double satisfaction; if it be not curable, he must pay fourfold."

"Whoever is convicted of striking his parents let him be condemned to perpetual exile, and debarred from all sacred rites."

Most of these passages are cited by Eu-

sebius, and appear, more or less, to resemble the laws of the Hebrew code. If, however, the resemblance in the more important religious considerations, between the whole manner and matter of Plato's laws and the legislation of the Divine lawgiver, had not made it likely that there would be similarity in smaller matters, these latter coincidences would not have been of so much weight.

But, in accordance with what we find in the books of Moses, in which it appears that after the code of laws is completed, obedience is again enforced by a most solemn appeal to religious principles, and the providence of God; we find in the laws of Plato that, in conclusion, he returns to this subject with his most earnest eloquence.

In preparing to do this he makes some statements which are very instructive, as shewing the religious condition of Athenian society, and placing in a very clear light the convictions of Plato as to the *real grounds of our religious belief*.

He says, "There are very many among ^{886.} us who believe that there are no gods at all, or, if there be, that they are such as do not concern themselves with men, or whom it is an easy thing to conciliate. And before making any severe enactments we must endeavour to teach them better."

Cretan. "Surely," says the Cretan, "it is easy to prove there are gods. First, there are the sun and moon, and other heavenly bodies, and the beautiful arrangements of the seasons, and then the fact, that all men, whether Greeks or foreigners, agree in thinking so.

Athenian. "I fear, my friend, these troublesome people would only laugh at you... You are not aware of the real source of their infidelity.

Cretan. "What can it be?

Athenian. "It is an obstinate ignorance, which appears to them to be the height of wisdom.

Cretan. "Explain yourself.

Athenian. "Among our writings there are some, which I believe are not permitted in your country, composed both in poetry and prose, the most ancient of which give an account of the first growth—*πρώτη φύσις*—of the universe, and the next relate to the generation of the gods—*θεογονίαν*—and what was the conduct of the gods to each other after they were produced. We cannot well find fault with them on account of their antiquity, yet we cannot approve of them for their influence on society, or for their general accordance with the truth. We must, therefore, put these ancient writings out of the question, and speak about such things in a manner acceptable to the gods.

 "Now our modern philosophers—*σοφοί*—have brought things to such a pass, that if

you and I were to point to the sun, moon and stars as divine, and in proof that these were gods; our youth, under their teaching, would say they were only earth and stones, and cannot care for man, and could eloquently maintain the argument.

“What then are we, as legislators, to do? Are we to meet the argument, or are we to drop the subject altogether, lest it should too much extend the introduction to our laws, and decide on a mere system of penal sanctions?

“The subject of laying such a foundation Cretan. for your laws is too important to be given up on such accounts.

“You are convinced, I perceive, that it Athenian. is a serious matter, and one which calls for prayer—*εὐχὴν παρακαλεῖν*—and it is difficult to enter on such an argument in a proper spirit. How can one keep his temper with men who declare their disbelief of traditions which we have received with our mothers' milk, which we have repeated in our childhood in our hymns, which we have heard in all our religious exercises, which have been associated with all that is sacred,...and who despise all these things without having a single reason for it agreeable to common sense, and thus throw the burden of proof on us?”

“We must however do our best to be calm; 888.

and, as though reasoning with one of them, address him thus: 'My friend, you are but young; your views of many things will change as time advances. Suspend your judgment on the most important subjects—and that is most important of which you now think lightly of, the bearing right views of God on human life.

“‘And there is one thing which you will allow. Neither you nor yours have been the first who have held these views about the gods; there have always been some affected with this disease. But this I would say in presence of many of them, that none of them retained such opinions to old age. Wait then, till you have inquired further, and especially learn of the νομοθετής, whether the gods neglect mankind, and whether offences against them are of no importance.’”

We have given this passage as proving incontestably that Plato in the first place regarded what may be called the Hellenic theology as worse than useless, and that in endeavouring to remove the inveterate infidelity which false philosophy had produced, he places *no reliance* on his own speculations, but falls back upon those dogmatical traditions which the Pythagorean discipline had made its basis, and which Plato had *reinforced*. Plato concludes his address with an

appeal which for the solemn seriousness of the latter part of it, and the general doctrine included in it, reminds us of the peroration of the Hebrew Legislator.

“Let this then be the conclusion of our ⁸⁹⁹ discourse to these. We now address ourselves to him who while he believes there are gods, doubts as to their being interested in the affairs of men. You, my friend, believe that the gods exist, and there is something in you which inclines you to reverence them. But ⁹⁰⁰ the fortunes of wicked men, though if rightly understood, they are not a subject of con- Ps. lxxiii. gratulation, are so exalted in public opinion, and so flattered by the muse, that you are tempted to impiety.

“For when you see impious men attaining an advanced life, leaving behind them children’s children in the highest honours, when you know of men of enormous wickedness rising from small beginnings and attaining to the height of power; while it is manifest that you are prevented by a better principle —*διὰ συγγένειαν*—from charging the gods with blame on account of all these things, you are betrayed by some *inconsequence*, —*ἀλογίας*—and by your anxiety not to think ill of the gods, to imagine that they despise and disregard the affairs of men.”...

Plato then goes on to shew, in all cases,

where a great object is to be brought about with certainty and perfection, it must be by the concurrent existence and perfection of a series of things which are severally regarded as of less importance; but as in the case of a human workman, in proportion to his excellence in his art, the minuter parts of his plan are elaborated with all his skill, so, much more in the Great Δημιουργός, whose wisdom is perfect, the smallest of his creatures cannot be neglected. "That He who directs his attention to the entire universe has arranged all things with a view to the efficiency and safety—πρὸς τὴν σωτηρίαν καὶ ἀρετὴν—of the whole, of which each particular part is recipient or efficient—πάσχει καὶ ποιεῖ—according to what belongs to it; and however minute a portion of the whole you and your affairs may be, it is made *to contribute* constantly to the whole. But you do not seem to consider, with regard to this subject, that all existence takes place for the sake of that, in order that by its happiness it may contribute to the life of the whole, so that it was given not only for your sake, but you also for its benefit. But your difficulty arises from not being able to understand the whole arrangement, and how your own best interests are mixed up with those of that whole existence of which yours is a part."

Plato then addresses his pupil, on the *omnipresence of Divine* justice: "This justice ^{904.} neither you nor any other will be able to boast that he has escaped. ... For you can never elude its watchful attention. Not if you were to become ever so small, and could descend into the depths of the earth, nor if you could take so high a flight as to soar into the heavens. But you must satisfy its claims, whether you remain in this world, or were to make your way to the shades, or betake yourself to regions still more dreadful. And with regard to those who attain to prosperity notwithstanding their wickedness, in whose fortunes you think you see the neglect of the gods, you view their case in ignorance of the conclusion of their course, and of the connexion it has with the universal plan; οὐκ εἰδὼς αὐτῶν τὴν συντέλειαν, ὅπη ποτὲ τῷ παντὶ ξυμβάλλεται."

"If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art ^{Ps. cxxxix. 8.} there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there."

We will close our citations from Plato with a passage relating to this same subject from the *Theætetus*: "Those who violate ^{176, D.} the laws of uprightness and sanctity may glory in their shame, in the midst of public applause, but they are culpably ignorant of the appropriate punishment of crime, which

176, R.

consists, not as they fancy, in stripes and loss of life—for these the innocent may endure—but in a visitation which it is impossible to escape. For as there are two conditions¹ of life, the one divine and blessed, the other ungodly and wretched, they are unconsciously, in egregious folly, receding from the former and being conformed to the latter, and thus their crime becomes their punishment; and we may add to this, that unless they depart from their infatuation, *that region also which is pure from evil* will reject them, and they must ever dwell in a state of being which is appropriate to their character: where being wicked men consorting with the wicked, they will become hardened in their crimes, and scoff at such doctrines as these, as at the statement of fools.”

It is clear from these specimens of Plato's doctrine, that in the strict sense of the word he was not a *Polytheist*. The Hellenic Polytheism he had laid aside, and whenever he spake of the government of the universe as a whole, he always referred to one all-prevalent Power as its sovereign Ruler. But he also believed, as did the Pythagoreans, in the existence of subordinate beings of a divine

¹ παραδειγμάτων—examples to imitate or avoid. Vid. Stallbaum's note, in accordance with which this passage is here somewhat freely rendered.

nature whom he called *θεοί*, and who occupied in his system *as nearly as possible the position of the Holy Angels*¹ of the Scriptures—and these he somehow associated with the heavenly bodies, as the later Jews appear to have done.

From what we know, notwithstanding the arrogations of modern philosophy, of the history of human speculations, a history which has presented its worst developements *in this philosophy itself*, it must, we think, to a mind duly impressed with the divine excellence of revelation, appear most improbable, that the spontaneous suggestion of Plato's mind should have so nearly and in so many particulars approached the inspirations of heaven. But we must now leave the evidence, thus selected from much more of the same kind in the writings of Plato, to the candid estimate of the reader.

Another distinguished disciple and friend ^{Xenophon.} of Socrates is Xenophon. Though born at Athens, and a genuine Greek, his character seems to have had in it more of the Doric than of the Ionian element. And as far as it is possible to judge of Socrates from Plato's

¹ Grotius, Matt. i. 20, remarks, *Hebræi spiritus istos qui inter Deum rerum opificem hominesque sunt interposita modo אלהים, deos,—modo, מלאכים, nuntios, vocant, quorum illud Græcè θεοὺς, istud ἀγγέλους significat. Atque inde eas appellationes sumsit Pythagoras, quem multa hausisse ab Hebræis Numenius alique Pythagorei profitebantur.*

Epist. ad
Cn. Pomp.
iv.

and Xenophon's exhibitions of him, and other traditions, Xenophon was much more like his master in the character of his mind and the cast of his sentiments, than Plato. Dionysius of Halicarnassus says of his writing, "*ἡθὺς τ' ἐπιδείκνυται θεοσεβὲς καὶ δίκαιον καὶ καρτερικὸν καὶ εὐπετές, ἀπάσαις τε συλλήβδην κεκοσμημένον ἀρεταῖς· καὶ ὁ μὲν πραγματικὸς τύπος αὐτῷ τοιοῦτος.*" The moral character which he exhibits is pious, honest, firm, yet agreeable, adorned with a combination of every virtue. And such was his practical ideal."

Xenophon had good opportunities of being acquainted with the views of foreigners, especially of the Persians, but we have no evidence of his having made it his object, as Plato did, to collect philosophical opinions, but much to shew that his taste led him to acquaint himself especially with what had a bearing on the conduct of life, and to avoid speculations on such subjects as were beyond the limits of human knowledge. We find in the sentiments he ascribes to Socrates, and to the elder Cyrus, the Pythagorean doctrines in considerable purity, with improvements which savour of a still better source.

Mem. iv.7,
6.

He says of Socrates, "With regard to celestial matters in general, he dissuaded his disciple from being a curious inquirer—*φροντιστήν*—as to the manner in which the divine

Being has contrived them; for he thought these things not discoverable by man, and that no one could be acceptable to the gods who pried into those things which they had not thought good to reveal."

With regard to the government of God, Mem. iv. 3. he introduces Socrates as demonstrating, by many inductions in natural theology, the universal providence of God in an aspect of benevolence to man, in the arrangements of the seasons, the formation of the human body, and the adaptation of all things to the beneficial use of mankind.

Socrates says, "You would be convinced iv. 3, 13. of the truth of what I say, if you would make up your mind to take the manifest workings of the gods as evidence of their being, instead of expecting till you can behold their forms.

"For consider this is the way in which the gods do manifest themselves, none of the deities make themselves *visible* when they confer their favours, but especially He who arranges and sustains the whole frame of things—*κοσμόν*—in which is comprehended all that is beautiful and good, and who continually presents for the use of men such things as are unworn, and healthy, and unaged—*ἀτριβῇ τε καὶ ὑγιᾷ καὶ ἀγήρατα*—and which minister (to His purpose) unerringly and more quickly than thought; He is discovered

in performing the greatest things, while in the management of these things He is to us invisible. Nay, that the *ministers* of God,—
 14. *ὑπηρέτας*—whose existence no one doubts, are many of them to be discovered only in their effects, and the soul itself, which partakes of the Divine Nature, is manifest in its dominion over our nature, while it is itself invisible.”

17. “But (to be acceptable to the gods) we must detract nothing from their power, for when a man does this, it is manifest that he is not then honouring them. And in doing this to the best of our power, we must be confident in them, and hope for the greatest blessings. For we cannot rationally expect from other sources such blessings as they can confer who have the greatest benefits in their power, nor hope for good from them on any other condition than that of offering them acceptable obedience.”

Bk. iv, ch.
 4. In discoursing of our moral duties, after speaking about the duty of obedience to the laws of the country, he comes to mention other obligations of a more general kind—which he calls *ἀγράπτους νόμους*.

19. “My opinion is,” says he, “that the gods have laid down these laws for men; for how could all mankind have assembled, or agreed together in their formation?”

"In the first place it is universally believed that we ought to reverence the gods."

"Then is it not universally believed that we are bound to honour our parents?" 20.

"Then that no incestuous connexion should take place; for that the violation of the laws of nature in this respect is followed by a punishment which providence inflicts." 21.

"Again, is it not a universal principle that we are bound to repay the kindness of benefactors? and though this law is often violated, yet those who transgress it are punished by the loss of friendship, and by being often made subservient to those who hate them." 24.

"It is certain then that all these things seem to belong—*ἔοικε*—to the gods, for that the violation of the laws should carry with it its own punishment is the work of a greater Legislator than human—*βελτίονος ἢ κατ' ἀνθρώπων νομοθέτου δοκεῖ μοι εἶναι.*"

In the *Cyropædia*, Xenophon, although he has given a Greek colouring to the drapery of his account, is reckoned by sober critics to have been, in the main, faithful in his facts.

"It is capable of demonstration," says Daniel, p. 391. Hengstenberg, "that the *Cyropædia*, apart from some mere ornaments, possesses great historical value, greater than can be ascribed to the statement of Herodotus. This proof has been given by Vitringa, and fully ad-

mitted by Gesenius. Herodotus had no other source of information than the accounts of modern Persians, which are manifestly mixed with fables suggested by national vanity, especially in the history of Cyrus. And the account of Ctesias for the same reason, besides differing considerably from that of Herodotus, is a still greater mixture of fable with truth."

How Xenophon obtained his information we have not the means of knowing, but it is remarkable that his account of the taking of Babylon is an important confirmation of the statements in the book of Daniel and other parts of Scripture.

vii. 5, 15.

We will give part of the account as it stands in Xenophon. He says, "Cyrus, when he heard that there was such a feast in Babylon, in which all the Babylonians were spending the whole night in drinking and carousing, on the night of this feast, as soon as it became dark opened up the trenches which had been dug near the river, and the water flowed into them in the night, so that the bed of the river became passable..."

24.

"When everything was prepared for the assault he exhorts his men: Take your weapons and come on, says he; I by the help of the gods will lead the way. And do you, Gadatas and Gabryas, be our guides, and as soon as we obtain entrance lead us directly to

the palace. And, indeed, said the party of Gabryas, we should not wonder if the gates of the palace were unbarred, as the whole city seems to have been in a revel the whole night....”

“The party of Gabryas indeed found the gates of the palace closed, but those who were appointed for the watch—ἐπὶ τοὺς φύλακας—came upon them still drinking in broad day, and immediately made an attack upon them. And as a shout and tumult was thus made, those who were within heard the noise, and as the king gave orders to see what was the matter, some ran out and opened the gates. The party of Gabryas then rushed in, and pursuing those who suddenly retreated within the palace made their way to the king himself....They found him with his sword drawn, but overcame him with numbers, and despatched him....”

“After these things were done Gadatas 32. and Gabryas came up, and first they thanked the gods for having inflicted punishment on the impious king—τὸν ἀνόσιον βασιλέα—and then embraced Cyrus with tears of joy.”

“*When it was day*, they found that the city 30. was taken and the king slain.”

Herodotus agrees so far with this account that he makes the city to have been taken on a night of debauch, but of the character

of the king and of his death he says nothing ; and his subsequent account of the life of Cyrus entirely differs from that of Xenophon, while the latter fully agrees with all the accounts of Scripture. Daniel, and afterwards Ezra, were in great credit at Babylon ; and it is not too much to suppose that the annals of Persian affairs which recorded, at the same time, the wonderful display of Divine providence in favour of the Jews and of the Persians, were in the hands of some with whom Xenophon was in communication.

With regard to the religious sentiments found in the *Cyropædia*, they are manifestly those of a Socratic philosopher, simplified and dignified, however, by the almost entire absence of speculation. We shall give a specimen from the address of Cyrus to his sons, on his death-bed.

Cyrop. viii.
7, 19.

Cyrus says, "I could never bring myself to believe that the soul lives while it is in a mortal body, but dies when it is free from that body ; for I find that it is the soul which gives life to mortal bodies as long as it remains in them. Nor do I believe that the soul then becomes without thought when it is separated from unthinking flesh, but, rather, when the soul by this separation becomes unmingled and pure, that it will then attain to perfec-

tion of wisdom... If then this be so, as I believe it is, and my soul leaves the body; then reverencing my soul, do what I desire of you. But though my soul should not survive, yet from reverence to the gods, who are eternal in their being, who behold all things, and have all things in their power, who maintain this universal frame perfect, and pure, and unerring—ἀκριβῆ καὶ ἀκήρατον καὶ ἀναμάρτητον— which is unspeakable for its beauty and its vastness; in fear of these let nothing impious or unholy at any time appear in your deportment."

With regard to Aristotle, it has not been Aristotle. usual to look for much conformity between his writings and the statements contained in the Hebrew Scriptures. His method of philosophizing was such, as while it gave him the advantage over Plato in regard to subjects within the possible limits of philosophical inquiry, sank far below it when treating of the nature of God and His providence. The method of induction as applied by Aristotle to matters of human observation, enabled him to arrive at conclusions which long endured the assaults of other sects without being shaken in the convictions of men. But his temerity in applying the same method to subjects which Pythagoras and his genuine followers felt to be beyond human experience,

and too sacred for human *conjecture*, led him to a mode of speaking about the Deity and His Providence, which procured for him in the opinion of many the character of an atheist.

That he was not in theory an atheist, however, has been shewn by many distinguished writers; among these Fabricius has made the following judicious remarks.

Bib. Gk.
Vol. II. p.
177.

“It appears to me that Aristotle is not to be classed among the atheists, although he taught that the world was eternal and emanated naturally from God, and included in his instruction many serious and portentous errors, from which if he had felt all their force, or had embraced all their consequences, he probably would have fallen into atheism, or at least become destitute of all religion, as was the case with Epicurus. Nor do I enter into the question what was the state of his mind towards God, and whether he had lost all conscience and love of the Deity in that study of his works to which his whole life was devoted. But this I can affirm, that from the writings of Aristotle as they now exist, it by no means appears, nor can it be gathered, that he was an atheist. And the same remark might be made about Hippocrates. For that both of them said so little about the Deity, may be excused in philoso-

phers who were anxious to explain things upon natural principles, rather than betake themselves to the first cause as to an altar, or in the manner of the tragedians making the Deity a part of their machinery to solve a difficulty, according to the method which Aristotle charges upon Anaxagoras.

“Because however they have been in error in their idea of the Deity or of the mode of his operation, it is no more right to charge them with atheism than any other philosophers whatever who have set themselves to explain the nature and attributes of the Deity, and endeavoured to bring to the level of human conceptions, a subject which is incomprehensible to man.

“It is a procedure neither happy, nor useful to religion and mankind, to force the most distinguished men of antiquity into the society of atheists against their will, and thus to confound with Spinosism and atheism the whole heathen world, while the Apostle himself did not so much charge the wise men among the heathen with the want of the knowledge of God, as that while they knew Him they honoured Him not as God.”

From the circumstances in which Aristotle was placed, it is more than probable that he was acquainted with the Hebrews and their writings. His pupil and patron Alexander,

Strom. i.
304.

Against
App. i. 22.

we know, took great interest in that people, and was referred to in some of their sacred writings. Clemens Alex. says expressly, that "The peripatetic Clearchus mentions his acquaintance with a Jew who had intercourse with Aristotle;" and according to Josephus Aristotle acknowledged the benefit he derived from it. "Clearchus," says he, "a disciple of Aristotle, and inferior to none of the peripatetics, in his first book, *On Sleep*, remarks that his master Aristotle made the following statement respecting a Jew. 'That this man was by birth a Jew of Coelo-Syria. Now these Jews are descended from Indian philosophers, and called by the Indians Calami, by the Syrians Judæi.... This man being kindly treated came down to the parts near the sea, and was Greek both in his language and in his spirit. So that when I happened to be in Asia about those parts, he conversed with me and other philosophers, and as he had lived with many learned men, he communicated more information than he received — *παρεδίδον τι μᾶλλον ὧν εἶχεν*.'"

Aristotle makes a sparing reference to tradition, at least in those parts of his philosophy in which he adheres to the Aristotelian method; we will, however, refer to one hint in his *Metaphysica* where he alludes to the earliest traditions so as to allow a Divine

origin to some of them, at least if we rightly interpret his ambiguous expressions.

He says, "There are handed down to us ^{Metaphys. xi. 8.} (statements) left by primeval and ancient (philosophers)—ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων καὶ παλαιῶν, καταλελειμένα,—in a mythic form, both that these, (*i.e.* the heavenly spheres) are gods, and that the Deity comprehends all nature, and to these have been added other mythic statements, in which the forms of men and animals and the like have been attributed to the gods, with a view to the people and to enforcing the laws. Now if from these *the latter were separated*, and only the first received, viz. that the primary essences were gods, one might reckon it divinely spoken—θείως ἂν εἰρησθαι νομίσσειε (τις). And in all probability as every species of science and philosophy has been discovered and has declined—φθειρομένων—so these opinions of theirs have been preserved as remains (of their systems)—οἶον λείψανα—to the present time. To this extent only is the hereditary and primeval opinion known to us—ἡ μὲν οὖν πατριος δόξα, καὶ ἡ παρὰ τῶν πρώτων ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἡμῖν φανέρα μόνον."

Whatever Aristotle might *know* of the *religious opinions* of other nations, (and that he was acquainted with such it is certain) it is clear that it could not be mentioned by him in connexion with his philosophical speculations.

Hist. Phil.
Vol. I. p. 50.

He thought about them doubtless as *Ritter* for instance has expressed himself, that "The Hebrews had no philosophy of any kind; the authors lived on in their own convictions, and were disposed to regard *this personal conviction* as the common ground of the national hope of salvation. In such a case, it was impossible for them to go back to those general principles of the *reason*, out of which all science takes its rise."

But it has been very commonly allowed, that Aristotle had another method of teaching less strictly philosophical, adapted and addressed to a different and more numerous class of hearers.

De Fin.
v. 5.

This is referred to by Cicero, "*De summo autem bono quia duo genera librorum sunt, unum populariter scriptum, quod ἐξωτερικὸν apellabant, alterum limatius quod in commentariis reliquerunt, non semper idem dicere videntur,*" where he is speaking about Aristotle and the Peripatetics.

Of this exoteric kind of writing was probably the letter of Aristotle to Alexander, entitled *περὶ κόσμου*. Its difference from the closely philosophic manner of Aristotle has caused it to be doubted, and its spuriousness has been *of course* assumed by modern philosophers, as is *invariably* done by them when an author is represented as knowing more of

religious truth than they think a philosopher should. But the judgment of a Fabricius, who had no orthodox prejudices, is, we fancy, more to be relied upon.

He says, "The true title of this book is, Bib. Gk. II. 127. πρὸς Ἀλέξανδρον ἐπιστολὴ περὶ τοῦ παντός, and I have no hesitation in classing this among the genuine productions of Aristotle, from the authority of Stobæus, of Demetrius on elocution, and of Apuleius who has translated it into Latin almost word for word, and declares that in this translation he has followed Aristotle, the most intelligent and learned of philosophers. Moreover, Justin Martyr ad Gentes, says, 'Aristotle in his discourse to Alexander has given a concise view of his philosophy'....Not to insist upon testimonies of Cicero, Origen, Theodoritus, and Themistius, as not sufficiently clear."

Some who have denied it to Aristotle have attributed it to Theophrastus.

The immediate followers of Aristotle and Theophrastus, it appears, had in their hands scarcely anything of Aristotle but his *exoteric* writings—at least if Strabo is to be relied on. He says, "It happened to the Peripatetics Bk. XIII. p. 875. who succeeded Theophrastus, from having none of the works (of Aristotle) except a few, and chiefly of the exoteric kind—ὅλως οὐκ ἔχουσι τὰ βιβλία, πλὴν ὀλίγων, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν

ἐξωτερικῶν—that they were unable to philosophise rigidly—πραγματικῶς—but descanted upon his positions—θέσεις ληκνθίζειν. Whereas, after the publication of his works, later Aristotelians were able more closely to adhere to his method, though they were obliged to draw upon their own resources in a great degree on account of the multitude of errors¹,—ἀναγκάζεσθαι μέντοι τὰ πολλὰ εἰκότως λέγειν, διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἁμαρτίων.” Now from the time of Theophrastus the mode in which philosophers of that school expressed themselves on subjects related to theology, is much more in the manner of the book *de Mundo*, which is reckoned an example of Aristotle’s *exoteric* style, than of his severer writings; and this makes it probable that writings, or at least discourses, of that kind were more numerous than appears from his extant productions, and made the strongest impression on the mind of his followers.

There can be no doubt, however, that this piece is a specimen of the *mode of thinking of that period*, and this is all that is important in our inquiry. And as such we shall give an extract from it.

Ch. ii.

Speaking of the universe, the writer says, “Of this the earth occupies the centre, being

¹ This is commonly understood of the faults of the manuscripts.

the home and mother of all kinds of living beings....The highest part of the universe, the abode of the Deity, is called heaven."

"A single *harmony*, by the mingling of ^{Ch. v.} elements most opposed to each other, has perfectly organized the entire system,...and what is comparable to the array and the swing—τάζει τε καὶ φορᾶ—of the heavenly bodies, moving as they do in exactest measures from age to age....What faithfulness—ἀψεύδεια—could be equal to that which the lovely and genial seasons observe in leading on in order winter and summer, days and nights, to the completion of the month and of the year!"

"But we must now speak summarily of ^{Ch. vi.} the constant cause—συνεκτικῆς αἰτίας—of all these things; for it would be wrong to speak even summarily about the universe, and not to mention that which is predominant in it—κυριώτατον. Now there is an ancient tradition handed down to all mankind, (which states) that all things are of God, and by Him consist. But no natural principle—φύσις—has a self-sustaining power—αὐτὴ καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἀνταρκής—if deprived of the safe keeping—σωτηρίας—of Him. For God is in truth the Preserver and Parent of all things which are perfected in this universe, not by enduring the toil of one who is occupied in a laborious task, but by the exercise of an unwearying power by

which he wields those things which seem (to us) most distant....”

“He occupies then the first and highest seat, and on this account is called the *Most High*,—*ὑπατος*. The (heavenly) body—*σῶμα*—which is nearest him enjoys His influence most, and so in succession to the abodes of men. Wherefore the earth and its inhabitants seem to be at the greatest remove from the beneficial influence of the Deity, and thus to be weak and disunited—*ἀκατάλληλα*—and full of disorder. Nevertheless, inasmuch as the Divine nature pervades everything, the things which relate to us as well as to those above us, more or less partake of His benefits, according to our nearness to Him.

“It is better and more befitting His dignity, therefore, to suppose, that the Power which has its seat in heaven, becomes the preserving cause even to those beings that are most distant from Him, and in short to the universe as a whole, than that moving from place to place He should compromise His dignity. For as it would not become the great (Persian) king to be personally present in managing the (several) affairs of his kingdom, much less would it become the Deity.

“Thus ought we to think about the Deity, as being most mighty in power, most eminent in beauty, eternal in His being, perfect in

His virtue. And thus, although invisible to all beings of mortal nature, He is yet manifested in His works. For all which takes place—*τὰ πάθη*—on earth or in the water, may with truth be said to be the works of God."

This account is in perfect accordance with the views which the Hebrews derived from their Sacred Writings, in which the government of God is constantly compared to the system by which the vast dominions of eastern monarchs were managed. And the Persian monarch himself, it is well known, was considered as the representative of God, and was thus visible only to the *ministers of his presence*, but was manifested in all provinces of his empire.

The view which Josephus gives of the doctrine of the Hebrew Scriptures, and of its influence upon other nations, though it is obvious from this very account that he was acquainted with Christianity, and that probably even his notions were modified by it, may be introduced here, as supplying us with information as to the spread of Hebrew theology after the time of the Ptolemies. His testimony concurs with that of others to shew, that in the midst of the violent contention of philosophers which prevailed from the time of Aristotle, the doctrines which became at length most prevalent accorded more and

more with those of the Hebrew Scriptures ; and heathen writers of eminence began to discourse, whether for praise or blame, about the Jews as a people.

His book addressed to Epaphroditus, in which his object is to correct the misstatements of Agatharchides, Manetho, and others, and in which he condescends to notice a notorious κρότολον, Apion, shews how abundantly qualified he was by his intimate acquaintance with Greek as well as Eastern literature to give valuable information on this subject.

He says, Apion II. 16 (1376, Huds.) “Our legislator believed that he had the Deity for his guide and counsellor, and being himself assured that whatever he did and devised was according to His will, he believed it to be his first duty to inculcate the same convictions into the minds of the people. In this respect our legislator was like the ancient legislators boasted of by the Greeks, as Minos and others, some of whom declared that their laws were derived from God.

“Of all the various constitutions among men, our legislator made choice of none. But he instituted, so to speak, a *theocratic commonwealth*, by referring the supremacy and the power to God, by leading the people to look to Him as the source of all the good which

comes to men, collectively and individually, and of all things which in trouble they obtain by prayer, and as a Being whose notice no action and no thought can escape.

“He taught, moreover, that God is uncreated, through all eternity unchangeable, transcending all mortal forms—*ιδέας*—in beauty, manifested by his power, but in his essence past our knowledge—*ἄγνωστον*.

“I do not now insist upon the fact, that such were the sentiments of the wisest of the Greeks, and that they were *derived from him*; but that these sentiments are noble and becoming the nature and grandeur of the Deity they have testified most strongly—*σφοδρὰ μεμαρτυρήκασιν*. For Pythagoras and Anaxagoras, and Plato, and the Stoic philosophers who succeeded Plato, as well as most of the other (schools), have plainly entertained the same views about the Deity.”

He says also, “I have shewn that our laws have constantly and increasingly been admired—*ἀεὶ καὶ μᾶλλον αὐτῶν ζῆλον ἐμπεποιήκασιν*—by all other nations. The first Greek philosophers, though seemingly adhering to the customs of their country, followed the Hebrew legislator, not only by receiving into their philosophy the same views of the Deity, but by adopting *similar rules of morality*. Nay

more, the multitude of mankind have been much inclined for a long time—ἐκ μακροῦ—to follow our religious observances. Nor is there any city of Greeks or barbarians, or any nation, to which our custom of resting on the seventh day has not come. They also endeavour to imitate our mutual agreement, our bountifulness towards each other, our industry, and our *constancy under persecution*. And this is the more wonderful, as our law prevails by its own force, and offers no allure-ment of pleasure. For as God pervades the universe, so His law has pervaded all man-kind."

Ap. i. 22. In particular, Josephus cites *Theophrastus*, as mentioning the oath called *Corban*, which is peculiar to the Jews.

Ib. He says, "Hecataeus of Abdera, who was at the same time a philosopher and a practical man, a contemporary of Alexander the Great, and afterwards on terms of intercourse with Ptolemy Lagus, wrote a book expressly on the affairs of the Jews."

Vit. Alex.
p. 691. This Hecataeus is mentioned by Plutarch as one of the historians of Alexander.

Another writer to whom Josephus appeals is Agatharchides, a peripatetic of Cnidus, who lived under Ptolemy Philometor, and the author of a work on Asia, which is cited by Diodorus, Lucian, and others. Josephus cites

Fab. Bib.
Gk. Vol. II.
p. 208.

him as stating, "there is a people called Jews, App. i. 22. who dwell in a city of great strength called Jerusalem, who are accustomed to observe the seventh day as a day of rest. When Ptolemy Lagus came to this city with his army, these men in observing this insane custom, suffered their country to submit to a harsh master, and thus their law was proved to be a foolish one."

"Demetrius Phalereus (a disciple of Theophrastus), Philo (who wrote on the kings of Judæa), and Eupolemus, besides the above, have approached the truth (says Josephus) about our affairs, as nearly as might be expected from the degree of their acquaintance with our writings."

Clem. Al.
Strom. i. p.
387.

The testimony which Josephus here gives is beyond exception; he appeals to writings known to have been then extant, and his statement is borne out by heathen writers who have given the history of opinions which were held in the last centuries before the Christian æra.

The Stoic and Epicurean schools were the two great classes into which, during this period, and while the Macedonian was merging into the Roman empire, the opinions of men diverged. The former harmonized with what remained of the better elements of the ancient Roman character, the latter with those

tendencies which sapped the foundation, and occasioned the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Under the names of Zeno and Epicurus, therefore, Diogenes Laertius has devoted a large part of his work to an account of these diverging principles of philosophy; and in doing so he has constantly referred to *documents* which existed in great abundance in his time, but which have almost entirely perished. The works of Chrysippus alone would have made a small library, if what Diogenes says of their number is true—*τὸν ἀριθμὸν γὰρ ὑπὲρ πέντε καὶ ἑπτακόσια ἐστίν*—above seven hundred and five. We will only refer to Epicurus to remark, that though in theory he taught the being of a God, and defended it by arguments as good as any, and was perhaps personally as respectable in his conduct as most heathen men, he preferred to live in virtual atheism, and became “at ease only by supposing himself the inhabitant of a forsaken and fatherless world.”

Rob. Hall.

The Stoics, on the other hand, as far as their speculations went, undoubtedly not only gave rise to pantheistic notions, but also gave a sanction to polytheism by their mode of interpreting the ancient Hellenic theology, as being but various aspects in which the one Supreme Deity was viewed.

But the strength of Stoicism lay in the

practical light in which they viewed divine and human things, and their speculations had but little influence on their discipline.

In the extracts which we shall give from the Zeno of Diogenes, and with which we shall close the inquiry as to the Greek philosophy before the Christian æra, a still greater approach to Scripture theology and Scripture morality must, we think, be admitted than had been found before, although it is only through a heathen writer, who at least was not personally inclined to the Hebrew theology, that we can obtain information.

“Zeno taught,” says Diog. L.¹ “that God Zeno, 73. is an immortal living Being, rational, perfect or intellectually happy, incapable of any evil, who exercises his providence over the world and the things which are in the world. But that He has no human form—that He is the Creator of all things, that in a general sense He is the Parent of all, and *especially as to that part of his nature which pervades everything*—
πατέρα πάντων κοινῶς τε καὶ τὸ μέρος αὐτοῦ τὸ διήκον διὰ πάντων.”

This latter phrase is explained by Plu- De Placitis Stoic. i. p. 892, A. tarch, who says, “That according to the

¹ The words of Diog. are, λογικόν, τέλειον ἢ νοερὸν ἐν εὐδαιμονίᾳ, which Hermann has rendered rationale, perfectum sive intellectuale, beatum. But Zeno’s idea of a perfect Being seems to have been that of one whose happiness was intellectual, as opposed to sensuous.

Stoics, God is a Spirit who pervades everything—*πνεῦμα διήκον δι' ὅλον τοῦ κόσμου.*"

This is as nearly as possible the mode in which the Scriptures speak of the Spirit of God, in distinction from His nature as considered generally.

But Zeno goes on to say, that this is expressed by many names according to its various powers—Dis—Zeus—Athene—and so forth; where he has been led astray by a false philology.

Zeno, 75.

"Destiny, according to the Stoics Chrysippus, Zeno, Boethus, is the appointed cause of all things—*αἰτία εἰρομένη*—or the plan—*λόγος*¹—according to which the world is managed." It was, in fact, not very different from the Word,—the appointment of God as spoken of in Scripture. They conceived this *λόγος* in some way to pervade all things, as a kind of active principle, and such notions might easily and almost naturally be gathered from many expressions in the Hebrew Scriptures.

79.

"The Stoics also say," says Diog., "that there are certain dæmons which have a fellow-feeling—*συμπάθειον*—with men, and are inspectors—*επόπτας*—of human affairs." These are doubtless the angels of Scripture, ac-

¹ The word *λόγος* is surely exegetical of *εἰρομένη* as connected with *εἶρομαι*, and not with *εἶρω*, though Hermann has said, *connexa rerum series*.

according to the language and doctrine of Plato.

With regard to their moral system, after giving an account of their analysis of morals, he speaks of their notions of virtue practically.

"They say that all virtuous men are grave; ^{64.} they neither converse nor listen to conversation for mere pleasure. That they are sincere—ἀκίβδηλους—and are very careful not to appear better than they are."

"That they are truthful, and put down both by word and look whatever is false...."

"That virtuous men are divine, for they have as it were a deity within them."

"That a bad man is atheist, for he either speaks against God, or he sets Him at nought."

"That the virtuous are godly—θεοσεβείς—for they are practically acquainted—ἐμπείρους—with the Divine laws."

"That the gods love them because they are holy and righteous before God."

"That wise men alone are *priests*, for they ^{64, 220.} devote themselves to those things which are acceptable to the gods."

"That wise men are not only free but ^{121.} *kings*, and of a kingdom where their rule is irresponsible, which consists only of the wise."

This was a saying of Chrysippus, and

has much the appearance of an imitation of
 Deut. xix. 6. Scripture language, "Ye shall be to me a
 kingdom of priests, and a holy nation," or,
 as it is in the New Testament, "kings and
 priests." Chrysippus was of Tarsus in Cilicia.

121. "They say that our parents and brethren
 are to be revered in the next degree to the
 gods."

"That friendship can only exist among
 virtuous men, and arises from their likeness
 to each other."

"That friendship is a *communion* of all
 those things that are necessary for life ; our
friends being treated as ourselves."

"That the virtues are so connected *that he
 who has one has all.*" His idea being, as ap-
 pears from the connexion, that he who has
 one virtue which is established on right prin-
 ciple has that *principle*, and therefore all vir-
 tues which result from it. This principle is
 a kind of moral *wisdom*, as opposed to that
 moral folly which is inherent in every vice.
 The wisdom and folly of the Scriptures are
 quite as wide in their signification ; and St.
 James has given a proposition the converse
 James ii. 10. of this, which is not very dissimilar, "He who
 shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in
 one point, he is guilty of all..."

The last sentiment we shall cite, is per-
 haps a greater improvement on the Greek

mode of thinking than any other; it is a saying of Chrysippus in his treatise, *περὶ ἔρωτος*—"That love is an impulse of benefi- 66, 130. cence—*ἐπιβολὴν φιλοποιίας*—arising from apparent beauty in its object, and that it is *not a matter of sexual connexion, but of friendship*; and that accordingly Thrasonides, although he had his mistress in his power, refrained from her because she disliked him. Love therefore belongs to friendship."

CHAPTER IX.

ROMAN WRITERS.

THE Romans are charged with the want of a philosophical spirit. There was in fact in the *genuine* Roman character a large share of that practical common sense which indisposed them for *speculation* on any subject; and above all, it does not seem to have entered their head that religion and the nature of Deity were subjects on which knowledge was to be elaborated from the human brain. The earliest religion of the Romans was founded on traditions derived partly from the Hetruscans, and had even more of an Eastern character than that of the Hellenes.

Numa, it is well known, founded his civil ordinances on those of religion, and professed to derive the latter, not from speculation, but from some Divine intercourse.

Numa, § 4. "And indeed it is reasonable to suppose," says Plutarch, "that God should shew a regard to men rather than to the lower animals, and that he should in a special degree be disposed to hold converse with good men, and that he should have held intercourse with a man of Divine virtue and wisdom...."

“And if this be so, there is no reason for doubting that the Deity held intercourse with such as Taleucus, Minos, Zoroaster, Numa, Lycurgus, in their government of a kingdom and framing a commonwealth. For if to poets and men of genius merely this favour has been granted, it is much more likely that the gods should hold serious intercourse with good men who needed instruction and advice in matters of the highest importance.”

Plutarch states also, “The laws which he § 8. laid down with regard to images of the gods, are entirely akin to those of Pythagoreans. For Pythagoras taught that the original of all things was not an object of the senses, but invisible, incorruptible, and an object only of thought; and accordingly Numa forbade to the Romans the use of any image of the Deity of animal or human form. Nor in those primitive times was there any pictured or sculptured representation of God; but for the first 170 years, although they formed temples and wooden chapels, they had no image whatever, in the belief that it was impious to represent that which is superior by inferior objects, and that the Deity could only be perceived by the mind.”

Although it is generally allowed that Pythagoras did not appear in Italy till several generations after the time of Numa,

it is also admitted that the institutions of Numa were comparatively ineffective till long after the time of this monarch; from which it appears likely that they were engrafted on the institutions of Pythagoras, as being in some degree congenial with them, and then first obtained an established importance.

This religion then, connected with a large amount of pure superstition—a real *δεισιδαιμονία*—which gave an awful importance to auguries and other mysteries of that kind, became the *inheritance* of the Romans, which they guarded with jealous care against any profane assaults of poets or philosophers, as long as the genuine Roman character was retained. The Roman feeling on this subject is well expressed by the Stoic Balbus; “You appeal to me as a Balbus and as Pontifex, by which I suppose you mean that those sentiments which we have derived from our forefathers respecting the immortal gods, their sacred rites, and our religious observances, should have me for a defender. I have always defended them and always will; and no discourse, whether of the learned or unlearned, shall ever shake me in my opinion about the worship of the immortal gods which I have received from my ancestors.”

Cic. Nat.
Deo, Bk.
III. 2.

The Romans, however, as a people, up to a short time before the Christian æra, had no

such knowledge of the East as to make them acquainted with its religion, and when by their conquest of Greece they possessed themselves of the philosophy of that nation, they had in a great degree lost their Roman character; and under the influence of fashion rather than of philosophy, adopted in general the worst parts of the most divergent sects of Grecian doctrine. They either revelled in the luxury of Epicureanism, or were hardened into the moral congestion of Stoicism, without its diviner and more humane elements.

Cicero was one of a small class of Romans belonging to what was called the New Academy. He has eloquently exhibited the doctrines of Greek writers on Divine and moral subjects, but there is no trace in his writings of any new light derived from an acquaintance with Revelation, except that the now widely-diffused light of Divine truth on the subject of morals, and the nature and destiny of the soul of man, had been collected in his writings.

In his treatise *De Natura Deorum*, we have really nothing more than is to be found in his Greek authorities, and in the study of these it is obvious his mind had become more unsettled than established.

"If," says he, "it is no easy thing to Bk. i. 5.
master any single discipline, how much more

to comprehend them all! This however must be done by those who set themselves to form a right judgment of all philosophers, for the sake of discovering truth. That I have succeeded in doing this I do not pretend, but I profess to have made it my object; and it is impossible that those who philosophise in this way should not reap some benefit. For I am not of those who think there is nothing true, but of those who find that the false is so mingled with the true, and is so like it, that there is no *mark of certainty* from which to form a settled judgment. And the result is, that there are many things which are probable, and these, although they be not thoroughly understood, are yet so eminent and illustrious in their practical use, that they serve to regulate the life of a wise man."

1. 22.

After impartially stating the views of Epicurus, which contain some excellent arguments for the being of a God, and a forcible reply to the inconsistencies of his doctrine, he comes in the person of Cotta to state his own positive views: "You ask me what God is, or what he is like,—quid aut quale sit Deus,—I shall answer with Simonides, who, when Hiero asked him the same question, required a day to deliberate; when questioned the next day, he asked for two; and as he often thus doubled the number of days, and Hiero wondered

how it was, 'because,' says he, 'the longer I consider, the more dim my hope becomes.' Now I imagine that Simonides, of many suggestions which occurred to him not knowing which was true, gave up the search in despair—*desperasse omnem veritatem*." In this and in other similar statements which this work contains, we have a declaration of Cicero's feeling, that Philosophy had done nothing towards explaining the nature of God, and his testimony to the truth of the sentiment of this word.—"Can'st thou by searching find out God? He is higher than heaven; what canst thou do? He is deeper than Hades; what canst thou know?"

And as to the *evidence* of His being, it is manifest that the main support of Cicero's belief was, the innate conviction of the human mind, evidenced by the consent of all antiquity. "What," says Balbus "can be more manifest, when we lift up our eyes to heaven, than that there is some Divine Nature of most excellent understanding, by which all these things are governed?...For if it were not a thing known and comprehended in our minds, the conviction would not have been so fully established, nor so confirmed by duration of time, nor would it have possessed an age coeval with the centuries of time and the generations of mankind."

Bk. II. 2.

In the Tusculan Questions, however, we have subjects on which more light, both divine and human, had been thrown; and these are stated by Cicero with proportionate distinctness.

Tusc. Disp.
I. 12.

“With regard to the immortality of the soul,” he says, “we have the best authorities for this sentiment; a circumstance which is wont to have great weight with us, as it ought to have. And in the first place, we have the consent of all antiquity, which was better acquainted with the truth in proportion as it was nearer its divine original. Accordingly this one principle was firmly fixed in the minds of our ancestors,...that death was not an annihilation, but only a removal and change of life, which conducted the illustrious to heaven, and which left the rest below, but yet surviving.”

13.

“Many have unworthy conceptions of God arising from corrupt custom, yet all agree in this faith, that there is a Divine Nature, and Power; nor is this opinion the result of their conference, or combination, or founded upon custom or law. In everything the consent of all nations is reckoned to be a law of nature... so on this subject, without the aid of reason or of instruction, we have these sentiments by the guidance of nature.”

19.

“Inasmuch as all our passions are in-

flamed by the torches of our bodily nature, it will assuredly be a blessed thing for us when divested of our bodies, we shall with them have put off our craving desires and fond emulations, and when released from cares, so that the mind is disposed to contemplate, we shall then effect that which we are now doing, with much more freedom of thought."

The conclusion of Cicero's piece on Old Age has been so often quoted that we shall refrain from introducing it here;—founded on the doctrine which has brought life and immortality to light, it would be a noble burst of triumphant hope. But the alternative by which it is followed seems at once almost to extinguish it: "But if we are not immortal, yet it is desirable for a man to be extinguished in his proper season. For nature has her measure of life, as of all other things; and old age is the finish of our course of life, as of a tale, which never should be lengthened out to the weariness of satiety..." It is found in most of the Greek philosophy before the time of Cicero, that there is exceeding little which amounts to a confession on the part of philosophers that there was anything seriously the matter, at least with *their own* human nature. A subject in which the sacred Scriptures remarkably differ from

Tusc. Q.
III. 1.

them. In this respect Cicero had somewhere been led to judge more truly. In speaking of the moral condition of men he says, "How is it that as we consist of soul and body, the management and cure of the body should have given rise to a science whose origin is reckoned to be divine, but the medicine of the soul was not desired, and when discovered was not valued nor cultivated in the same degree, but by many is looked upon with suspicion and hatred? Is it because the mind feels the diseases of the body, but the body knows nothing of those of the mind, so that the soul is left to decide on its own case, when that which is to judge is in a state of disease? Now if we had come into the world in such a condition that we could clearly have discerned nature herself, and have been able to shape the course of our life by her guidance, there would have been no further need of the exercise of reason and the aid of instruction—*haud sane erat, quod quisquam rationem¹ et doctrinam requireret*. But as it is, she has given us only glimmerings, which we so soon extinguish by depraved opinions and practices, that the light of nature nowhere

¹ Duplex est vis animorum atque natura: una pars in appetitu posita est, quæ est *ὁρμή* Græce, quæ hominem huc et illuc rapit; altera in *ratione* quæ docet et explanat quid faciendum quid fugiendum sit. Cic. Off. 1, 28 fin.

appears: for these seeds of virtue are innate in our souls, and if these were permitted to come to maturity, nature herself would conduct us to happiness of life. But now as soon as we are brought into the world, we dwell in the midst of depravity and the most perverse opinions, so that we seem to imbibe what is evil from our mother's milk; and then under the management of our parents and tutors we become so imbued with various errors, that truth is borne down by what is false, and nature by inveterate opinion. And when to all this are added the influence of the poets, whose specious instructions become engrafted into the mind, and that of the world, which is on all hands in agreement with vice,—*atque omnis undique ad vitia consentiens multitudo*—we become absolutely polluted by depraved notions, and are in a state of revolt against our better nature—*tum plane inficimur opinionum pravitate, a naturaque descisimus.*”

It is well known, that the fourth Eclogue of Virgil attracted the attention of early Christian writers; and such men as Lactantius, for instance, saw in it a prophecy of our Saviour, which Virgil had imitated from the Sybilline books. The documents, however, to which Lactantius appealed as Sybilline have been long regarded as spurious, and the Eclogue

could not have been taken from them. But there are many circumstances to render it probable that Virgil was not a stranger to the sublime poetry of Isaiah—his extensive learning, his religious taste, his love of what was ancient and Eastern, and the well-known fact that there was a flourishing community of Jews at Rome in his time, whose prevalence, in a literary point of view, was then very great at Alexandria, with which Rome had lately become so notoriously acquainted.

Now the editors of Virgil have tried hard, though in vain, to give a good account of this Eclogue. A few of the ideas are doubtless to be found in Hesiod; but *the grand idea* of ascribing to the *unborn child* of Asinius Pollio almost everything which Isaiah had prophesied of the Virgin's offspring, the Branch of the root of Jesse, or the idea of a *golden age to come*, must be either a pure and most marvellous invention of Virgil, or a beautiful adaptation of ideas which the Prophet's very striking language suggested. This unborn child was to bring on the *latter day*. His life was to be divine, and the gods were to dwell with men. Iniquity was to be put down. He was to bring peace on earth, and justice. Wild beasts and serpents were to be harmless, the earth would yield its increase, and milk would be abundant; the earth was to exchange its

weeds and barrenness for fruits and flowers. It is no reflection on the poet Virgil, and much the more agreeable to common sense, to suppose that the idea presented by Isaiah together with many of the noblest features of his picture have been imitated by Virgil, while, where ancient Greek legends presented themselves which could be *adapted* to his scene, he has been careful to introduce them¹.

Something of the same kind must be said of the pictures which Ovid has given in his *Metamorphoses*, in which he has made use of all the traditions of the Greeks about the origin of things. Many of the several parts are doubtless to be found in Hesiod, and in poetic writings of a later date, which have only come down to us in doubtful fragments. But his arrangement of the whole, and his way of stating some of the several parts, are either wonderfully original, or sketched after an ancient model which was before him.

¹ Vid. Lowth on the poetry of the Hebrews.

CHAPTER X.

REFLECTIONS ON THE FOREGOING STATEMENTS.

IN the review which has thus been given of that part of heathen literature which relates to those subjects in which the Hebrew Scriptures are almost wholly occupied, we see, in general, the human mind engaged in the most arduous efforts to extend its knowledge beyond those bounds to which its powers are *naturally limited*. Notwithstanding the *acknowledgment* of the greatest and the best of those who have led the opinions of men, that human powers are limited, and that true wisdom seeks to be acquainted with these limits; we see in the history of the human mind thus far, a perpetual tendency to dwell upon the very verge of possibility, rather than to cultivate the sphere within it. And because beyond this verge unaided reason could no more arrive at *truth* than it can anticipate the developments of future time, philosophy has been resolved at least to *dream* about it, and has derived a restless pleasure from vain excursions into a boundless and unsubstantial void. And, strange to say, it is only as far as it has done this that it has, at least in modern

times, been thought entitled to the name of philosophy!

Now we find also that in the neighbourhood of a people whose *elite* have been most distinguished for this, whose people have been described by one of themselves, as *περίοντες* Demosth. Phil. i. 5. *πυνθάνεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἀγορὰν λέγεται τι καινόν*;—there lived a nation, of whom it is now said that “they had no philosophy,” but who yet were, and had been for ages before, in possession of *all the most celebrated positions* which philosophy has gained, and Grecian sages are dignified with the title of *divine*, exactly and almost solely for having some how acquired notions which had long been written down, and had become familiar to every Hebrew peasant and every Hebrew child.

Moreover, it constantly appears that these divine philosophers are detected in possession of truth, in proportion as it can be shewn that they had travelled where it was to be found; and while men who remained in their own country could invent nothing on these higher subjects but absurdities, and were generally employed in surrounding any sound truth, which had been supplied them, with webs of speculation made to be swept away; the earnest seekers after truth who left this philosophic soil, returned with fresh discoveries,

as though truth had been indigenous only on barbarous ground.

It also appears that such discoveries became more frequent and abundant, as it can be shewn that the truths of Revelation became more accessible, and as those on whose *memories*, at least, it was written had a wider intercourse with surrounding nations.

One result of all this is—a result which, we are assured, was brought about in “the wisdom of God,”—a full establishment of the fact, that “The world by wisdom knew not God.” That is,—if mortals may speak of divine wisdom,—The wisdom of God appeared in this, that, whereas the earliest and the most prevalent source of human corruption, as far as the *knowledge* of divine things is concerned, has been the self-sufficiency of *speculation*; a succession of efforts of this kind should be made, in circumstances perfectly favourable to a fair trial of human powers, aided and stimulated, from time to time, by hints of truth from the authentic source, but that all of them should be found unavailing to any practical acquaintance with divine things. And even though these hints became more abundant and important and philosophy was compelled by them to alter its course; though more correct ideas of God were thus forced

upon it from without; His providence acknowledged “in erring reason’s spite ;” a future ^{Pope.} life more divested of its darkness, and the philosophy of morals moulded into a purer form than reason had ever devised ; yet all this was so far from exalting the human character, and bringing about a genuine acquaintance with God, that it was both in Greece and Rome attended with a perpetual sinking towards corruption ; so that, to use the remarkable language of the Roman historian, “Magis ^{Livy, In-} et magis lapsi sunt ; tum ire cœperunt præci-^{trod.} pites ; donec ad tempora, quibus nec vitia sua nec remedia pati potuerunt, perventum.”

CHAPTER XI.

CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

IT was then that it pleased God to put forth His own power, by a method in which *this* philosophy had no place, and by the *positive* achievements of this method to give a triumphant and everlasting proof of our absolute dependence on Him for all our knowledge of divine things.

That light of truth which with a clear yet measured brightness had illuminated a small portion of the earth, or extended its rays into the other surrounding parts only to make the darkness visible,—at once, with a progress which is compared to the “lightning which shineth from the East even unto the West,” burst upon mankind, penetrating the recesses of society, raising the lowest of the people to a height of knowledge and true philosophy, compared with which the highest and brightest points of heathenism become mean and almost invisibly dim; pointed out a certain and universally “acceptable” way to the favour and filial love of the Deity; wrested from death his sceptre; brought life and immortality to light, and gave such power to the world to

come, as to master the passions of men, winning from their heart its malignity, and laying the foundations deep and unassailable, on the principles of universal love, of a kingdom destined to "bring forth judgment unto victory."

Yet even the Gospel met among philosophers the same reception at first which they had given to the Hebrew doctrines. They used it largely to improve their systems of morality, they employed its facts to attach to the history and character of heathen great ones, while they threw scorn on the doctrine itself, or ignored its source. At first this was thought sufficient. As long as Christianity was the philosophy of fishermen and artisans, it was not thought worthy of being named as an object of attack, it was a "superstitio," though "exitiabilis." But when it began manifestly to affect the life of society, when the temples became deserted, the altars unsought, the offerings sparing, the victims unsaleable, when people of all ages and classes began to "sing hymns to Christ as to a God," then began the active opposition. Governments and colleges of priests, a Celsus and a Tatian, Porphyry and Hierocles, Cynics and even Platonists threw themselves in its way. But they did so in support of a hopeless cause. While they thought to have conquered Christianity, and for this purpose

had recourse at length to other than philosophical weapons, they were destined to see their efforts frustrate, and their systems trampled in the dust.

We have dwelt at greater length on that part of the history of heathenism in which the influence of Revelation has been regarded as more questionable, than it will be necessary, or possible in our limits to do, over a period in which the general *acquaintance* with Revelation cannot be doubted.

Seneca.

Nothing can be more manifest than that a broad light of revealed truth was already resting on the philosophy of *Seneca*. Born in the second year of the Christian æra, he lived to see the Christian religion, if not, as Tertullian asserts, favoured in the first years of Nero's reign, certainly *marked* by persecution afterwards, and the *opportunities* at least, of being acquainted with its doctrine must have been abundant. That Seneca had availed himself of these appears everywhere in his works.

Lactant.
Div. Inst.
l. 4.

With regard to the nature of the Deity, Lactantius remarks of Seneca, "*Quam multa de Deo nostris similia loquutus est!*" and gives this example: "When speaking of an early death," he says, "you do not understand the authority and majesty of your Judge; He is the Ruler of the world, He is the God of

heaven and all the gods; on whom those Divine natures which we individually reverence are dependent.—*suspensa sunt.*”

There is an interesting passage in his ^{Bk. iv. c. 6.} piece, *De Beneficiis*, in which he obliquely rebukes the language of Virgil, in his first Eclogue:

Deus nobis hæc otia fecit
Ille meas errare boves....

“God is He who has bestowed on us, not a few oxen merely, but has distributed herds of cattle for us over the world, and in whatever parts our flocks may wander, has supplied the fodder of winter and the pasturage of the summer.... Who has taught us not merely to *modulate upon a reed*, but has contrived for us so many arts and such varieties of words and sounds whether vocal or instrumental to be employed in song!

“But nature, you say, affords me these. You do not see that when you speak thus you are only using another name for God. For what else is nature than God, than Divine wisdom intimately connected with the world and all its parts?... You may address by different names this Author of all our blessings as often as you please. You may call Him *Jupiter optimus ac maximus*.... You may call Him *Stator*, not as historians say, because he stayed the flight of the Roman

army, but because all things stand by His goodness, and He is the establisher....You may call Him *Fate*, for as fate is nothing else than a complication of causes, He is the First Cause, on which all the rest depend...."

Bk. IV. c.
8.

"Whithersoever you turn you meet with Him. Nothing is destitute of Him, He fills all His works. When you then, most ungrateful of mortals, talk of owing nothing to God, but only to nature, your language has no meaning."

The language of Seneca, in his *Epistles to Lucilius*, is often almost purely Christian. We will give a specimen from the forty-first.

"You are most excellently and advantageously engaged, if, as you say, you are perseveringly seeking a right mind, and this it were unwise to *wish for* merely when its attainment depends upon yourself. You need not lift your hands to heaven, nor intreat the temple-keeper to admit you to the audience of an image, as though you would be more heard in that way. God is by your side, He is with you, He is within you. I mean this, *Lucilius*, a Sacred Spirit has his seat within us, who notices and watches whatever is evil or good respecting us, and His conduct to us is influenced by ours to Him. No good man is without God. Can any one rise superior to fortune, except by His assistance?"

He it is who supplies noble and elevated counsels. . . . As the *rays* of the sun are in contact with the earth, but yet are present at their source—*ibi sunt unde mittuntur*—so that Great and Holy Spirit, sent down that we may have a nearer knowledge of divine things, though He has converse with us, departs not from His origin.”

It is probable that Seneca has used this language in a sense somewhat different from that of Scripture, but it is plainly an imitation of the *language* of inspired teachers respecting the “Spirit of God.”

The following language respecting a future life, and the ultimate destiny of the world, must have been borrowed from a Christian source. It is contained in an address of great tenderness to Marcia on the loss of her son in the bloom of life. After speaking in exalted terms of his accomplishments, his filial affection, and his unsullied character, he says, “Reckon then your son still present in the contemplation of his virtues, as though now he was more than ever yours. There is nothing now to call him from your side, he can no more be a source to you of solicitude or sorrow. The only thing which you could mourn over respecting him you *have* bewailed sufficiently; all the rest is free from calamity and fraught

Epist. ad Marciam.
§ 24.

with pleasure now, if only you make a right use of your child, and set your thoughts upon that part of him which was most valuable. The *image* of your son alone is lost, a *likeness* merely which did not perfectly resemble him,—he himself is eternal, of a higher condition of being, despoiled of burdens which were no part of *him*, and left apart from them. These bones and flesh, this countenance and hands and other parts which minister, are impediments and darkness to the soul. The mind is oppressed, bedimmed and polluted by means of these, is kept off from what is true, from what is its own, and is turned aside to what is false. His whole struggle was with this cumbrous flesh, lest he should be drawn down and overthrown. Now he rests his foot where he is free from it; there an eternal repose awaits him, where, delivered from whatever is confused and dim, he contemplates all things in transparent purity. Why then should you thus resort to his sepulchre? That which was worst and most troublesome to him lies there, which was no more a part of him than were his habiliments. His nature has wholly escaped,—to be detained a little while above us till it has lost all mortal taint, then to be borne on high and mingle with the spirits of the blessed."

In the Epistles of St. Paul and in those of St. Peter, we have a solemn reference to a time mentioned in the last of the prophets of the Old Testament which should "burn as an oven." When "The elements should melt with fervent heat"—and a "new heaven and new earth" should appear upon the ruins of the old. A doctrine similar to this is found at the close of this address to Marcia.

"For, if the universal destiny can be a Ch. 26. consolation to you, nothing in nature will remain where it at present stands, Futurity will overthrow everything and bear it away. It will sport not with mortals merely, but with localities, with regions, with the quarters of the globe.....it will destroy every living thing with the sinking world, and with devastating fires will scorch and burn all mortal things. And when the time arrives when the world *shall be destroyed to be again renewed*, these elements shall fall a prey to their own forces; stars shall come into collision with stars, and whatever now in its several sphere is luminous, in one conflagration of every combustible material shall be on fire."

"And we blessed spirits, to whom eternal things are allotted, when it shall please God again to construct these things, shall be changed into our ancient elements. Happy is your son, Marcia, who already knows

these things." This latter sentiment, though obscure, seems like a substitute for the Christian idea of the glorified body of the Resurrection—when "This corruptible shall put on incorruption."

Plutarch.

Epictetus obtained a kind of distinction soon after the death of Seneca, and has left many sayings in accordance with the improved philosophy of his time. But Plutarch, who was born about 15 years before the death of Seneca, and flourished about 30 years after his death, will better serve for an exponent of the heathen philosophy of that period. By the time in which Plutarch wrote his most famous pieces, Christianity had already become formidable, and it is manifest that while heathen writers in an earlier part of the first century are much inclined to abandon their polytheism, by the time of Plutarch those who did not go over to Christianity, *or to something like it*, were inclined to cling more closely to polytheism, and to render it more respectable by taking the God of Revelation for the pattern of their supreme Deity, and conferring His attributes on some one of the idols of antiquity, while they borrowed the light of Revelation to arrange a system of religious philosophy more in accordance with the sentiments which Christianity had made prevalent.

Accordingly almost at the same time that *Justin* was seeking instruction in Divine things from the Stoics, Peripatetics, Pythagoreans, which did not satisfy him, and had given up even his favourite Platonism for a doctrine in which his mind found full conviction and repose; Plutarch, though enlarging his acquaintance with the truth, was endeavouring to strengthen the defences of his heathenism by Christian materials. In his latter years he became a devout priest of the Delphian Apollo, and as such became the apologist even of Egyptian gods, and attempted to discover the divinest wisdom in "Demens Egyptus." We have therefore in Plutarch a strange mixture of what appears the lowest superstition, with sentiments and discourses worthy of enlightened Christianity.

Borrows from Christianity to adorn his heathenism.

His book *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*, contains a masterly argument in defence of the *Providence of God*. It is a dialogue in the manner of some of Cicero's pieces. After having exploded an Epicurean, they enter calmly on the discussion of this subject with the view of removing the difficulties of a doctrine on the truth of which they were agreed. And in reply to the objection that punishment loses its value as a corrective by being long delayed, Plutarch answers, "I will begin by imitating the caution of the

On Providence.

Ch. 4.

Academy. For it is a more serious thing for human beings to speak about divine and heavenly things, than if one who is ignorant of music or of war should discourse about them. None but a physician can well understand the reasons which a physician has for his treatment of a patient, so it is not for man to say more than this about the gods, that while He knows best the proper season for applying the healing process for crime—*τῆς περὶ τὴν κακίαν ἰατρείας*—He administers the punishment to each as a medicine, of which neither the same amount nor the same time is adapted to all cases. For that medicine of the soul called *Justice* transcends all other sciences, as Pindar testifies by calling the Ruler and Lord of all men *Ἀριστοτέχνην*, as being the supreme administrator of justice to whom it pertains to define the when, and how, and how much an individual transgressor is to be punished."

"According to Plato, Minos derived his laws from Zeus, as though without such teaching man would be unskilful. And in fact human laws are often unworthy of their authors, and even ridiculous, as were some of those of the Lacedæmonians, Romans, and of Solon himself. How then can we wonder, when human affairs are thus ill conducted by human beings, that we cannot understand

the reasons which the Deity has for inflicting punishment sometimes sooner, sometimes later?

“I say not this to avoid the difficulty, but Ch. v. as a consideration from which we may feel that the doctrine is safe, though we may not succeed in *mastering* all its difficulties. But consider this in the first place, that God has placed Himself before us as an example, and grants to those who are able to follow Him to attain to human virtue, in which man in his degree becomes like God. *For as all nature is in a state of disorder*, it has this means of recovering and becoming a κόσμος, viz. by being in some degree assimilated to the idea, and by partaking of the virtue of the Divine Being....and there is no greater good which man can derive from God than by becoming thus a partaker of the Divine Nature.

“Now it is not because God is afraid He should have to *repent* of His decisions that He does not accelerate the punishment of crime, but to teach us by His own example to refrain from what is ferocious and violent in seeking redress for injuries. And that by following the example of his gentleness and delay, we should proceed orderly and deliberately in the administration of justice.

“If examples of *human* moderation have influence over us, how much more likely is it

that by looking to God, in whom there is no defect, who is without repentance, but who yet defers His punishment and waits for the appropriate time, we shall become cautious in such things, and reckon a divine part of virtue that meekness and long-suffering—

With long-suffering, forbearing one another. Eph. iv. 2.

μεγαλοπάθειν—which God Himself exhibits, according to which, by chastising He amends a few, but by His delay in doing so, He benefits and instructs a multitude.

VI.

“Again, it is likely that the Deity perfectly understands the condition of the soul to whose disease His justice is to be applied, whether it is such as is *inclined to repentance*.

Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 2 Pet. iii. 9.

And thus He gives space for repentance to those who are not wholly and incurably depraved. Inasmuch as He knows how much of the virtue which he gave them at their birth they still retain, and in what degree that in them which is noble remains, as not having been obliterated but merely *overgrown* by evil education and bad connexions, and may be restored to its natural habit by due attention... But whatever is *incurable* He at once cuts down as injurious to others, and still more so to the sinner who lives on in sin.

“For, as the best soil is often most overgrown with weeds and most unpromising in appearance, which an unskilful farmer would condemn, while one of experience would cul-

tivate it with especial care ; so the most generous natures are often most fertile in such faults as men would at once visit with destruction, while He who is a better judge waits till the proper season, when experience shall have come to the aid of reason and native virtue, and nature shall bring forth its genuine fruits."

In regard to natures incurably evil Plutarch says, vii.

"Some men of enormous wickedness are permitted to remain for a time to be as it were the executioners of the divine judgments, and are then cut down ; and such I believe most tyrants are....Just as some of the most formidable wild beasts are useful in checking the multiplication of noxious animals..."

"Nor is it surprising, if a farmer does not cut down the thorns nor burn up the weeds till the crop is ripe, that God does not destroy and eradicate a root of evil and rugged nature from those of a generous and noble kind until these have borne their own fruits."

In shewing that the execution of the sentence however long delayed *will come*, he says : "To the gods the whole space of human life is as nothing. The present as compared with thirty years ago is like the evening in which the sentence of the morning is to be executed. And a malefactor imprisoned in this life is

The case of Pharaoh mentioned. Rom. ix. 6.

Let both grow together until the harvest. Matt. xiii. 20.

ix. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day... but the day of the Lord *will come*. 2 Pet. iii. 8, 10.

like one in a dungeon from which there is no escape ; and though a man should spend his life in revel, he is only like the convicts who amuse themselves in prison while the rope is about their necks."

To those who are familiar with the language of our Lord and his apostles it is unnecessary to point out the close agreement of most of this of Plutarch with the Christian doctrine. He had manifestly not been prevented from making *acquaintance* with the Christian philosophy by that jealousy of its pretensions, which towards the end of his life deterred some from inquiring into it, or stimulated others to become so far acquainted with the Christian writings as to make them the object of attack.

Tacitus,

Among the former of these was *Tacitus*, who had ransacked the heathen accounts of the Jewish people, while he almost ignored the writings of their own historian *Josephus*, and the authentic documents from which he drew his accounts. And in the case of Christianity he has sadly violated his own rule.

Hist. i. 1,

"Incorruptam fidem professis, nec amore quisquam et *sine odio* dicendus est."

Galen.

Galen, who was born soon after the death of Plutarch, was acquainted at least with the writings of *Moses*, which he prefers to those of *Epicurus* ; and in his work, "*De usu par-*

tium," has demonstrated the wisdom and goodness of God in the spirit of devout philosophy. But he does not seem acquainted with the Christian system. And *Marcus Antoninus*,^{Marcus Antoninus.} though acquainted with the Christians as his subjects, whom he sometimes seems to favour and sometimes to give up to persecution, had no accurate knowledge of their religion, and, in fact, notwithstanding his many instructors in philosophy, there is little evidence that he was a *reading man*.

Among those who, about this time, in a certain way *perused* the Christian writings, are two Epicureans, — Lucian and Celsus.^{Lucian.} The former exercised his satirical powers against religious systems of every kind, and, among the rest, against the Christian. In his book, *De morte Peregrini*, he gives many correct representations of the doctrine and faith of Christians, and mentions, among other things, that *they possessed sacred documents*,^{§ 11.} which were read in public. He also speaks of their sacred *δεῖπνα*, and the religious^{§ 12.} discourses with which they were attended.

Celsus, whose attack against Christianity^{Celsus.} is known only from the answer of Origen, but whose language Origen has professedly cited, has either quoted or made distinct allusion to a large number of passages in the New Testament. He refers *to the disciples of Jesus*, and though he makes a garbled and uncandid

use of them, to attack their doctrine, *he expresses no doubt of their genuineness*. His quotations are principally taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew, with every part of which he seems familiar¹; but he has also cited the other Gospels, several of the Epistles of St. Paul, and the Apocalypse; or at least has shewn his acquaintance with them.

Porphyry.

Porphyry did not flourish till nearly a century later, but, as a celebrated opponent of Christianity, may be mentioned here. He is said, though not on perfect evidence, to have been brought up a Christian. But he flourished as a new Platonist; and from the very large citations which *Eusebius* has given from his philosophical works, as well as from some of these still extant, he was manifestly a distinguished ornament of his age. And *Euse-*

Prep. Ev.

P. E. v. 14.

bius speaks of him with great respect, as
ὁ γενναῖος Ελλήνων φιλόσοφος, ὁ θαυμαστὸς θεολόγος.

He wrote an elaborate work against the Christians, to which Methodius, Eusebius, and Apollinarius replied; but both the work and these Apologies are lost. Eusebius says, in reference to it, “*Porphyry*, who lived almost within our memory, wrote a treatise against

vi. 19.

¹ The term εὐαγγέλιον is used by him probably as applied to the four Gospels. He says, Cont. Cels. ii. 27, that some of those who believed, ...μεταχαράττειν ἐκ τῆς πρώτης γραφῆς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τριχῇ καὶ τετραχῇ καὶ πολλαχῇ.

our faith ; in which he endeavoured to calumniate the sacred Scriptures, and made mention of those who had interpreted them, but was able to substantiate no charge against their doctrines, though he abused their interpreters, particularly Origen."

St. Jerom, in various parts of his writings, has referred to the attacks of Porphyry, on particular passages, from which it appears that Porphyry was well acquainted both with the Gospels and the Epistles.

St. Chrysostom remarks, "They who have written against us are sufficient to testify the antiquity of our writings ; for instance, Celsus and Bataneotes (Porphyry)."

Hom. vi. in
1 Ep. Cor.

The extracts which Eusebius has given from his philosophical writings shew that, though he was much such a religionist as Plutarch, *i. e.* had become a superstitious worshipper of heathen gods, he spoke about the Deity, His attributes and His providence, as well as about the duties of life, by the aid of the Hebrew and Christian Revelations.

In fact, Christianity had now become so well known, had so deeply affected the life of society, had carried off so many distinguished men from the Heathen party, and had taken such a station in the *literature* of the time ; that for heathen philosophers to be unacquainted with it had become the *exception*, and not the rule. There were many examples of men

who were *almost persuaded* to be Christians, but who were deterred by the remaining obloquy and disabilities which were still allowed to test the sincerity, and to stimulate the zeal of its genuine disciples.

It is not for us to say what amount of *spiritual* benefit had been derived by those who from the earliest times of heathen philosophy had received the light of revealed truth in increasing measure, till heathenism was utterly outshone and extinguished by the power of its beams. It is too evident, from what has come before us in this inquiry, that though this truth had reached the understandings of men, it had in most cases only afforded them materials for speculation, and had seldom been received with any approach to the *obedience* of faith. The *spiritual necessities* of men had been forced upon their attention, but the true means of supplying them were either unperceived or indignantly rejected. Above all, the great idea which is exhibited in all the Scriptures, less clearly in the Old Testament, but fully and gloriously developed in the New Covenant, of *the mode of acceptance with God*, is perhaps nowhere found in heathen philosophy; and that "Articulus stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiæ," which has been too loosely held in Christendom itself, has always been the last to recommend itself to the spirit of a philosophy which has ever most tena-

ciously clung to the eldest and most dangerous vice of the human mind, *i. e.* a tendency to claim to itself the credit of blessings which have been wholly supplied by the Father of lights from whom cometh every good and perfect gift.

On no subject has more credit been claimed for philosophy than on that of the soul's continued existence. We have seen that in the earlier accounts of the Hebrews which have come down to us, it was a part of the *method* of Divine teaching, to require implicit repose on His boundless goodness for the entire future being of the objects of it. Yet to those who had *attained* this confidence an assurance of some glorious future was vouchsafed, which was not the less connected with a "fulness of joy," because it was indefinite as to its mode. And with all the eloquent things which were said on this subject by the Greeks and some of the Romans, *all* which they could say beyond this indefinite hope, or, if you please, inherent belief, was either to becloud it with dreary fancies, or to make it incredible by wild speculations—the effect of both which was to increase the doubts respecting the doctrine itself; and there is much to shew that these Epicurean doubts had not only deeply infected the heathen world at the time of our Lord's appearance, but with the prevalence of Greek ideas in Palestine, had pro-

Acts xxiv.
15.

duced the Sadducean heresy among the Jews: while that part of the people who faithfully adhered to their Sacred Scriptures as a whole, maintained, as St. Paul asserted, "the hope in God that *there should be a resurrection* both of the just and unjust."

De usu
Partium.

We are not to wonder that this development of the Hebrew doctrines was a new stumbling-block in the way of human reason. Galen had declared it impossible that God could create man out of the dust of the Earth. How many more difficulties seemed to be in the way of the *resurrection of the dead*! Yet this doctrine was a corner-stone of Christianity.

A still greater stumbling-block was the doctrine of the Cross. But this too was declared to be the power of God and the wisdom of God.

It seemed as if by these philosophy was at length to be driven to despair. All compromise with it was at an end. These doctrines could never appear to spring from human theories. They rested absolutely on Divine authority. They were *proclaimed* to men "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." Henceforth, philosophy—by stumbling at the doctrines of heaven, was destined to be "*broken*,"—by throwing itself in their way, to be "*ground to powder*." That so "our *faith and hope might be in God*."

APPENDIX.

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF RELIGION IN GERMANY.

IN the *Studien und Kritiken* for 1848, Dr Hundeshagen, Christian Advocate in the University of Heidelberg, has the following remarks :

“The first age of the Christian Church is rightly called the apologetic, for the Christian religion had then to win its right to existence by its struggles. We of this age are in this respect carried back to the commencement of Christianity, for the fore-front of the battle of parties relates to the very existence of the Christian religion.

“Who has not heard in all directions voices exclaiming in this way: ‘The so-called facts on which Christianity rests are mere fictions of the fancy, creations of human consciousness, which are now recognized by the mind as such, and as merely such recalled. Christ is a myth, which the understanding under certain historical circumstances projected, as Isis and Artemis.’ Or even this: ‘Religion in general is an illusion, though an inevitable one, as long as reason has not attained in its developement to full acquaintance with its own powers.’

“‘God is only the being of the human spirit itself, viewed by itself separately. Our relation to God is the relation of a man to himself, but regarded as another.’”

“If we consider that these, and similar assertions, are not mere wanton frivolities, but are brought for-

ward as the result of deep philosophical and critically historic studies, that during the last ten years a whole literature has been devoted to this theme, and that this is the tone of almost the whole general literature of the day, there can be no doubt that we are called upon to apply our Christian attainments to that same apologetic task which engaged the first century; nay, more, to go even further back than the ancient apologists did; for they had to contend, not so much with atheism and irreligion, as to defend Christianity itself from both these charges."

Dr Hengstenberg is known in this country; he is one of the few literary men who, with a perfect acquaintance with all which has been going on around him, and unrivalled ancient learning, has never bowed his knee to the Baal of German philosophy, has long struggled with almost passionate earnestness to avert its effects, and has seen afar off the cloud which is now bursting over his father-land.

In the *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* for January, 1849, he makes the following affecting statement:

"From the year 1836, and especially since 1840, the infidel and antichristian spirit has made a progress among us which has caused the soul of every God-fearing man to tremble within him with presentiment of that judgment of God which must be the inevitable result. Every such heart is filled with the sentiment of the Prophet: 'Why is my soul so full of woe? my heart beats within me, and I have no peace, for my soul hears the trumpet-blast, the battle and the death-cry; the land is desolated, and suddenly is my tent overthrown.' For He in whom we live, and move, and have our being, is to our people more and more a

A free rendering of
Jer. iv. 20.

stranger: the Saviour is driven by His servants from His own inheritance.

"The freezing blast of ungodliness which is sweeping over the whole land is to those who remain true to their God and Saviour almost intolerable. They feel themselves strangers and pilgrims in their own fatherland. They can well enter into the words of the Psalmist: 'All who see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out their lips and shake their heads—Thou hast put away mine acquaintance from me, thou hast made me an abomination to them.' Almost all the important vibrations of public life, all the national movements in Germany, are only different variations of the theme: 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' In every new attire has Antichrist appeared on the stage of public life, and the hoarse applause which he has found in every fresh appearance has been given, not to his attire, but to *himself*, whom a spirit of his own nature has recognised in all his changes."

"But if," says Dr H., "our own testimonies be not
No. 3.
Jan. 10th.
 listened to, perhaps that of a De Wette may, whose writings have usually served the spirit of the times. He says, in the preface to his *Apocalypse*, 'The self-deification of the Romish Antichrist appears to me but a child's play compared with the God-denying, infidel, presumptuous, and dissolute egotism of the present day.' . . .

In May, Dr H. traces more particularly these evils p. 342.
 to their source. He says, "If we now take a summary view of the symptoms of our time, if we reflect on the circumstance that the facts relating to Christianity, to Christ, and to the Living God, are ignored and rejected;

that this has for a century been the case among educated classes, and is now extensively so among the lower: if we reflect on the exciting and seducing philosophy which refers everything in life and conduct to perception (*erkenntniss*), and which thus raises the subject of perception to the summit of arrogant and arbitrary Atheism — that this in its modern outbreaks from Hegel, through Strauss, Bruno Bauer, Feuerbach, down to Daumer and Nork, has been brought to a more than burning hatred against God and His Gospel, has found disciples accomplished for all that is *Satanistic*,—if to this we add, what we have *now* lived to see the selfishness of high officers of state, the seditious outbursts of the people against their rightful government, the open and avowed socialism, the formal adoption of the *sovereignty of the people*, i.e. of *demagogues and their mob*, in the place of God, and His Anointed . . . and the *proclaimed irreligion of the State*. . . .—when we take a view of these evils, and perceive how they are deeply rooted in the science, habits, and feelings of the life of the people, we feel as though there were no hope of rescue, and as if the Devil were driving a desperate game with our whole existence.”

Nothing can be a stronger testimony to the fact that these evils are the genuine fruit of that abandonment of *established principles* and of historic authority which left the foundations of the German Protestant Church unsound, than that men like Dr Hengstenberg, who have ever been the strongest opponents of the Roman Catholic Church, should be now inclined to see in *her* possession the principles, for want of which they are on the brink of ruin.

He goes on to say: "Under these circumstances ^{1b.} we are constrained to look about us, . . . our own immediate circle is the Evangelical Church. But a greater circle still which surrounds us is Christendom in general, a distinguished member of which by our side is the (Roman) Catholic Church. With regard to that, with all its defects, and far as we may be from the idea of joining it, we acknowledge that the (Roman) Catholic Church has preserved in itself—though we cannot say unimpaired—the being of godliness and Christianity, and we therefore hold, that the grounds which might formerly have at least excused animosity, *exist no longer* . . . And we wish and desire that while the two confessions maintain inviolate all that is peculiar to them, the common confession of the Divine Redeemer should be regarded as the common basis of mutual esteem and love . . . We are animated by no other spirit towards the (Roman) Catholic Church than it becomes us to cherish as members of the same body of the Lord. We would not *tolerate* them merely, we honour the (Roman) Catholic Church, and would fain go hand in hand with them, in mutually cleansing ourselves, that so we may be the better prepared to unite in making head against all which threatens the honour and the existence of the Christian name.

"With all its defects, which are dangerous to us, and which prejudice the power of the Gospel in itself, the (Roman) Catholic Church has advantages over ours, and has in the entire latter period so splendidly manifested these advantages, that we cannot allow ourselves to be blind to them, but would rather take occasion to be humbled before her, and to take a lesson from her."

We have cited this earnest language, as that of men who in all respects deserve attention, and because we strongly feel that the solemn warning which they have uttered, is far from being unnecessary here. Whatever other tendencies there may be, it is certain there are none which in their approaches are so much to be dreaded, but which have actually made so dangerous a progress, as the fond adoption of those very methods of philosophizing which have borne such pernicious fruits in Germany. Un-english and essentially un-logical as they are, they have manifestly given a tone to the language of multitudes in our own country, *and their conclusions have been commonly adopted as though they had been proved.*

THE END.

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